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INSIDE TIMES2

Chanelmania!
The power of Coco's jacket



Martha's death was preventable — if only the doctors had listened

Energy discounts for customers who back local wind farms

Chris Smyth
Emily Gosden Energy Editor

Residents have been promised lower energy bills if they consent to wind farms nearby, after a ban on turbines was relaxed in a deal with Tory rebels.

Planning rules were changed last night to make it clear that a single local objection cannot block onshore wind, as Rishi Sunak moved to head off a Commons defeat. However, wind turbines will remain harder to build than other projects, leading to accusations that Sunak had "bottled it" and predictions of only a few new sites.

A de facto ban was imposed by David Cameron in 2015 but Sunak promised changes last year under pressure from environmentalists and pro-growth Tories, who see wind power as a way to boost the economy and ensure domestic energy supplies.

MPs led by Sir Alok Sharma, the former Cop26 president, and including Liz Truss, forced the issue with an amendment to the Energy Bill, which had its final Commons stages yesterday, prompting ministers to make immediate changes to head off a vote.

Michael Gove, the levelling-up secretary, said: "Current policy has been applied in such a way that a very limited number of objections, and even at times objections of single individuals, have been taken as showing a lack of community backing. This is not the policy intent." He said he was clear that supportive communities should benefit through discounts. He promised to set out details within weeks, with some schemes offering 10 to 50 per cent off.

Sharma said the changes were a step forward. Claire Coutinho, the energy secretary, said that onshore wind power had a key role to play and the changes would speed up projects where local people wanted them.

Reports, page 6
A welcome move, leading article, page 25

KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES



Hollywood royalty The Duchess of Sussex with the former Destiny's Child singer Kelly Rowland, centre, and the actress Kerry Washington at a Beyoncé concert in California, one of several appearances by Prince Harry and Meghan in A-list circles over recent days that have been seen as part of a return to the US limelight Page 5

Mentally ill to work from home in benefits revamp

New plan for reducing the 2.4m people claiming incapacity payments since pandemic

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Hundreds of thousands of people with mobility and mental health problems will be told to look for work they can do from home under plans to plug job vacancies and cut the benefit bill.

The shift towards working from home will allow those who struggle to leave the house or suffer social anxiety to do jobs that would have been impossible a decade ago, ministers argue.

In addition fewer people will be able to claim incapacity benefit under rules designed for those at risk of suicide, which ministers believe have been interpreted too loosely.

Disability charities described the changes as a cynical attempt to cut benefits, since those judged too ill to work are entitled to up to £4,680 a year more than those required to look for a job, who can face sanctions if they do not. Mel Stride, the work and pensions secretary, promised to listen to concerns and said the reforms would help people to "fulfil their potential" by finding work.

Some 2.4 million people claim incapacity benefits and a steep rise since the pandemic has alarmed ministers at a time when business has a million vacancies and the public finances are so tight.

The Times disclosed this year that Stride planned to "rewire" the welfare system to allow people to keep claiming sickness benefits while returning to work. Legislation has been pushed beyond the election, however, and yesterday Stride set out interim reforms to the work capability assessments that he wants to abolish. He said that 65 per cent of those assessed were classed as unable to work, more than three times the rate of 2011, when the rules were last overhauled. This had contributed to a 62 per cent rise in incapacity benefits over a decade, to £26 billion a year.

Stride said that it was "holding back the labour market and the economy but perhaps most important of all, it is holding back human potential".

A fifth of those judged unable to work say they would like to, and officials believe that with support "tens if not hundreds of thousands" of people could

Continued on page 2

Health alert as Britain braced for high of 32C

Peter Chappell

Britain is on course for the hottest day of the year, prompting warnings that a late heatwave poses a risk to the NHS.

Temperatures are likely to hit 32C today and tomorrow, promoting an amber alert from the UK Health Security Agency for all of England except the northeast until Sunday evening.

An amber alert means temperatures represent a "potential for the whole population to be at risk", in turn putting extra pressure on the health service. Other sectors may also start to observe significant effects. It is one stop down from a red alert, the most serious.

The amber alert warns specifically of increased health risks to people aged over 65 or with respiratory and cardiovascular conditions.

Dr Agostinho Sousa, the agency's head of extreme events, said: "We advise you to check on older family members, friends or neighbours and those with heart or lung conditions. Staying hydrated and keeping cool is crucial for everyone during hot weather, while enjoying the sun."

A heatwave is likely to be declared in several locations and for much of the UK it will feel "very warm to hot", the Met Office said.

The warmth follows the sixth wettest July on record and a disappointing August. Temperatures will be nearer the September average next week.

Today would start off misty in many places with low cloud burning off during the morning for a hot day with a risk of isolated thunderstorms in the evening, Rachel Ayers, a senior meteorologist at the Met Office, said. Tomorrow and Friday were also expected to be fine and dry.

Weather, page 55

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VISIT…

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Today's highlights

7.05am **Grant Shapps**, the new defence secretary
9.35am The Conservative MP **Danny Kruger** on his new book Covenant: the New Politics of Home, Neighbourhood and Nation
Noon PMQs Unpacked with **Tim Shipman**
2pm **Mark Drakeford**, first minister of Wales, takes part in Education Week
3.35pm The actor **Jason Donovan**, right, chats to **Fi Glover** and **Clare Balding** about his career and a new production of Grease



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TODAY'S EDITION

Broke council faces questions

Birmingham city council has been accused of "lying to the public" after effectively declaring itself bankrupt amid concerns about how its previous accounts were signed off. It is the latest local authority to collapse financially. **Page 4**

Young women turn to vaping

Vaping has more than tripled among young women in the past year, driving a "worrying" surge in the number of non-smokers taking it up. Nearly 7 per cent of women aged 16 to 24 vaped every day last year, the ONS found. **Page 14**

Private gender clinic for teens

The director of a new private clinic hopes to start prescribing cross-sex hormones within a "couple of months" to teenagers questioning their gender. Dr Aidan Kelly is among several former staff from the Tavistock gender clinic in London at a new practice. **Page 19**

161 days since Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was detained in Russia
#FreeEvan



EU heads for 1m migrants a year

Calls for a British-style approach to processing asylum claims in non-European countries such as Rwanda are gathering momentum among EU members as official figures suggest that more than one million migrants will arrive in the bloc this year. **Page 26**

Arm aiming at $52bn valuation

Arm has set its sights on a $52 billion initial public offering, stoking expectations of a possible payday of almost $100 million for investment banks and advisers. The British chip designer aims to raise up to $4.87 billion with its return to the market. **Page 31**

England to play 'magician' Smith

Marcus Smith will be England's "magician" in his new substitute full-back role at the World Cup, with England hoping he can fire up their struggling attack late in games. He is primed to come on in the second half against Argentina on Saturday. **Page 66**

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Hospitals found to prioritise targets over needs of patients

Kat Lay Health Editor

NHS hospitals have been choosing who to treat based on targets rather than clinical need, a study suggests.

Researchers from the University of Birmingham said that an 18-week "referral to treatment" target had had unintended consequences.

The standard, introduced in England in 2012, means that, at any time, at least 92 per cent of patients requiring hospital treatment should have been waiting for under 18 weeks.

Researchers scrutinised monthly waiting time data published between 2016 and 2021 for the 144 non-specialist acute hospital trusts in England and found a "threshold effect". Data repeatedly showed a large rise in the number of trusts exactly meeting the 92 per cent target threshold, followed by a sharp drop after the target was reached.

The researchers said this suggested some trusts were treating the minimum number of patients waiting under 18 weeks to comply with the standard.

The threshold effect only disappeared during the pandemic, when it became "virtually impossible" to meet the target, they said. Writing in the journal BMJ Quality & Safety, they said: "Our findings suggest that trusts may choose whom to treat based on the target instead of clinical need, as the target provides no encouragement to treat patients who have only been waiting for a short time or who have already passed the 18-week wait."

There are 7.6 million people on the waiting list in England, the highest number since records began in 2007.

Richard Lilford, professor of public health at the University of Birmingham, said: "Targets for referral to treatment are unhelpful. Policies need to change to reflect a growing, ageing population that places increasing demands on healthcare providers. Without a more nuanced set of targets we are likely to see few providers able to meet the threshold and have little incentive to do so when the only back-up target is 12 months."

There have long been concerns about the unintended consequences of targets in the NHS, often focused on A&E where a target for 95 per cent patients to be dealt with before they have spent four hours in the department is due to be scrapped.

In a linked editorial, Nigel Edwards, chief executive of the Nuffield Trust, a health think tank, said that while targets could be effective and were helpful for public accountability, the study "joins a long litany of examples of the unintended impact of targets".

Rachel Power, chief executive of the Patients Association, said: "Targets can introduce perverse behaviours. When we asked patients [for] their views about scrapping the four-hour wait for A&E, we found patients were more concerned about the quality of care received in A&E than how long someone waited. They also expected patients to be prioritised for attention based on need. The authors of this study appear to echo the concerns patients have raised with us."

An NHS spokesman said: "The suggestion that the NHS is incentivising trusts not to bother treating people once they pass 18 weeks is nonsense — treatment priority is determined by the clinical needs of patients. The NHS has a clear plan in place for reducing the Covid backlog."

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesman said: "Cutting waiting lists is one of the government's top five priorities and we want patients to have access to treatment as quickly as possible."

Queues highlight shortage of dental practice places

Kat Lay

Patients queued from 4am in an effort to secure NHS dental care at a surgery near Manchester.

Problems accessing NHS dentistry are widespread, with about 12 million people needing treatment. In July, the Commons health and social care committee said the service was "totally unacceptable in the 21st century".

Leah Price photographed a queue outside the Avenue Dental Centre in Leigh, Wigan, last week.

Posting on Twitter/X, she described the scene as "ridiculous". She wrote: "I feel like I'm in a Third World country. Twenty places to get on with an NHS dentist which have now all gone. I got here at eight, an hour before opening, and people have been here on chairs since 4am. I'm fighting to get someone to help me with issues I've got which are likely worse because I have Crohn's."

The British Dental Association (BDA) said it was not an isolated incident, with a practice in Faversham, Kent, receiving 27,000 calls for 60 NHS slots last month and early-morning queues outside a surgery in King's Lynn, Norfolk, in May.

Eddie Crouch, the BDA's chairman, said: "These scenes have no place in a wealthy 21st-century nation, but risk becoming the new normal for millions."

The Department of Health and Social Care said: "We are making progress to boost NHS dental services, with 23 per cent more courses of treatment delivered last year compared to the previous year and 1.7 million more adults and 800,000 more children receiving NHS dental care."



These would-be NHS patients queued at a dental practice in Faversham, Kent

Streeting: I'll look at NHS weekend risk

Wes Streeting, the shadow health secretary, has pledged to examine a "Monday to Friday culture" in the NHS in the wake of the death of Martha Mills.

He was asked on BBC Radio 4's *Today* about criticism of weekend staffing after the 13-year-old died under the care of King's College Hospital, London.

A coroner ruled last year that Martha might have survived had doctors identified sepsis earlier.

Her mother, Merope Mills, has said she and her husband raised concerns about Martha's deteriorating health several times but these were not acted upon. Regarding Mills's comments about how quiet NHS wards were at weekends, Streeting was asked: "Is this something you think needs looking at, the contracts of senior doctors?"

He replied: "I am worried about the fact that NHS services on any day of the week are overstretched and poorly performing in too many cases. I do worry about the Monday to Friday culture that sees patients potentially at greater risk over the weekends — that just can't be tolerated."

Right to a second opinion, leading article, page 25

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Benefits changes

be encouraged back to work. Stride is consulting on reforms that would make it harder for people with some conditions to get benefits that impose no requirement to look for work.

They include people who cannot move 50 metres unaided or leave the house, those who have difficulty with social contact and the incontinent.

Stride denied that the changes were a clampdown, promising to help people to find jobs. But he insisted: "I believe that there is essentially a contract between the state and the individual, which is that if people are to be supported and they can work, then it's right that they should be expected to do so."

One in seven of those claiming incapacity benefits qualify through "substantial risk" to their mental health, which Stride said had "gone beyond the original intent" as he set out plans to tighten or abolish the provision.

"These changes will not affect people who are nearing the end of life, or receiving cancer treatment, nor will they affect the majority of activities for those with severe disablement," he told MPs.

But "the rise in flexible and home working has brought new opportunities for disabled people to manage their conditions". He added: "We've seen a huge shift in the world of work in the last few years."

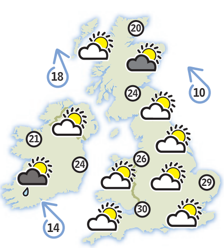
Stride said that the need to consult on changes and retrain assessors meant the reforms were unlikely to come in before 2025, but some Tory MPs want him to move faster. Allies insisted that it would happen "as soon as practicable".

Liz Kendall, the shadow work and pensions secretary, said he was "tinkering at the edges of a failing system". It was clear, though, that "benefits assessments are not fit for purpose", and she insisted that Labour's plans to get people back to work were more ambitious.

James Taylor, of the charity Scope, said disabled people could be forced to seek work when not well enough, and then lose their benefits: "In the grips of a cost of living crisis this could be catastrophic."

Ken Butler, of Disability Rights UK, said the reforms "are less to do with helping disabled people into work than a cynical attempt to impose conditionality and to reduce benefit payments".

THE WEATHER



Staying dry across most of Britain and Ireland with sunny spells, hot in the south. **Full forecast, page 55**

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Venice takes a punt on entry tickets

Officials hope a fee to get in will deter visitors but critics say it makes the city a theme park. **Tom Kington** reports

ALAMY



As visitors poured back into Venice this summer, proving the pandemic was just a blip in the city's slide towards tourist saturation, officials decided to take the plunge and charge an entry fee.

Starting in 2024, Venice will make day trippers pay €5 to get into the city on 30 of the busiest days in the year in an attempt to curb crowds that are making life unbearable for residents.

The announcement of the scheme follows earlier plans to charge entry fees that were trumpeted before being sent back to the drawing board. "Charging an entry fee to get into a city is a world first so we needed some fine-tuning," Simone Venturini, Venice's tourism chief, said yesterday.

Venturini insisted the city meant business this time after 40,000 day-trippers arrived on peak days during the summer, joining 40,000 tourists already staying in the city and far outnumbering the shrinking population of 49,324.

The €5 fee will only be paid by day trippers, not hotel or Airbnb occupants, Venturini said.

"The problem is the visitors who all arrive at the train station in the morning, all walk down the same street to get to St Mark's Square then all turn around and go home," he said.

Venice is battling a rising tide of tourists as visitor numbers soar across Europe, with residents in Barcelona staging street protests amid attempts to bar cruise ships pulling into the Spanish city.

In Venice, cruise ships have been curtailed but boats packed with day-trippers still arrive from beach resorts further along the coast.

If visitors are not deterred by the fee, officials hope they will at least choose to come on quieter days. "When you book your ticket you will be able to see how many people have already booked," Venturini said.

"It also means we can see how many people are in the city," he added.

Ticket holders arriving by bus, train or boat in Venice will have a QR code on their phone checked by inspectors. Plans to install turnstiles at the station have been postponed, and there will be no limit to the number of tickets sold, Venturini said.

A year ago the city said it would charge up to €10 to enter Venice all year around, but later scrapped the plan. "There was a lot of resistance and the scheme slowed down, but when we saw the crowds this year we knew we had to hurry," said Venturini.

Another incentive came last month when Unesco recommended Venice be added to its list of endangered world heritage — which already features sites in Ukraine, Syria and Iraq — arguing Italy was not doing enough to protect it from over-tourism.

Critics say the focus on day-trippers ignores the problem of the growing number of Airbnb rentals in Venice as locals flee the city and put their apartments online.

Venice was given the green light by the Italian government last year to impose limits on rentals, following the example set by other cities. Paris restricts Airbnb owners to letting their property for 120 days, London opted for 90 days and Amsterdam chose 30 days.

The ticketing concept leaves Venice with a conundrum. If the city can cut crowds it can avoid turning further into a theme park, but critics argue that there is no better way to ensure such status than by selling tickets to get in.

Matteo Secchi, the president of Venice residents' activist group, said the ticketing scheme would guarantee the city turns into "Disneyland".

"Right now it's impossible to walk around this city on certain days and we share the aims of the city, but not the method," he said. "Making visitors pay to get in turns Venice into a museum or theme park rather than a city where people live, go to the supermarket and drop their kids off at school.

"When visitors have a ticket in their hand will they think us residents are tour guides and feel they have the right to ask us directions?

"There is one way to manage the influx — close the city to tourists when it gets too much. They did it in 1989 when Pink Floyd played here. Why can't they do it again?"



In summer, as many as 40,000 day-trippers join 40,000 tourists staying in flats and hotels, far outnumbering the city's 49,324 residents. But protesters say no to the entrance ticket for Venice, as it is a city

How others cap visitors

- Cities and nations around the world add tourism taxes to hotel bills, but few charge entry fees. Bhutan, the tiny nation nestled in the Himalayas, charges tourists $200 (£160) a day to visit in an effort to attract "high value, low volume" tourists, with the fees going to improve local infrastructure and protect the environment.
- Quintana Roo, the Mexican state that includes the resorts of Cancún, charges tourists an $18.80 (£15) entry fee to protect its beaches and Mayan sites, and hired a Canadian firm to stop visitors slipping through arrivals at its airport without paying.
- New Zealand charges most tourists NZ$35 (£16) on arrival to help maintain the country's sites as visitor numbers grow, with an exemption for its Australian and Pacific island neighbours.

Prehistoric brain grew as lunch shrank

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

About 300,000 years ago our Stone Age ancestors took a big leap forward when deadlier hunting weapons were invented.

What propelled them into this new technological era has been debated for decades but researchers have now proposed a simple theory: these ancient humans had killed and eaten all the big animals around them and now needed tools to catch smaller ones.

The researchers looked at nine prehistoric sites that were habited from roughly 1.5 million to 20,000 years ago in South Africa, east Africa, Spain and France. From the animal bones found, they believe that the dominant prey species at the beginning of the period was a 12-tonne elephant. By the end it was a 25kg deer. During this time humans moved from using basic wooden spears to weapons with cleverly crafted — and very sharp — stone tips. These were produced using the Levallois technique, fashioning a piece of stone into a dome shape then removing "flakes", which could serve as blades or spear tips.

Later they invented bows and fishing hooks and learnt to recruit dogs to chase down quarry. The usual explanation is that hunting tools changed because of improvements in the cognitive abilities of humans, that our ancestors were suddenly able to imagine the outcomes of sophisticated manufacturing processes.

The study asks what could have driven this cognitive advance and concludes that the disappearance of large prey was the most obvious cause.

Dr Miki Ben-Dor, of Tel Aviv University, who helped to lead the research, said: "Studies of contemporary hunter-gatherers indicate that a wooden spear is quite sufficient for hunting large prey like an elephant, by trapping it and thrusting the spear into it and waiting for it for bleed.

"On the other hand, a middle-sized animal like a deer is much more difficult to trap, and if hit by a wooden spear it will probably run away."

In a paper published in the journal Quaternary, the researchers explain that humans began to make basic stone tools about three million years ago, and started to hunt about two million years ago. "A more substantial wound induced by a stone-tipped spear is likely to slow [prey] down and reduce the distance it can run before ultimately collapsing, increasing the hunter's chances of retrieving the fallen prey."

Goodness gracious, great balls of beautiful stone

Tom Whipple Science Editor

The first of the stone balls appeared some two million years ago — roughly hewn, recognisably round, able to fit in a hand. Once our ancestors started making them, they didn't stop.

Why? We don't know. What we do know, a new scientific paper argues, is that some of these balls were made with purpose and with a definite, apparently aesthetic goal: to be as close to spherical as possible.

If so, this is about more than stone balls. The artefacts, the scientists argue, demonstrate very modern cognition: the search for symmetry and the Platonic ideal of a sphere. "Being able to conceptualise something as abstract as a sphere and then manifest that physically by shaping a stone demands a great deal of skill," Antoine Muller, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said. His paper, in the journal Royal Society Open Science, adds to a long-running debate about the "lithic spheroids".

Somehow, these ancient members of the genus that would one day contain *Homo sapiens* knew what a sphere was, and they aimed for it. But far from solving the mystery of the spheres, Muller acknowledges that if anything this adds to it. "Why they want to make a sphere is a great puzzle," he said. "It could be purely for aesthetic reasons or it could confer some functional advantage. At this point, anyone's guess is as good as mine."

News

Bankrupt city leaders accused of lies and counting on a crock of fool's gold

Mario Ledwith

Birmingham city council has been accused of "lying to the public" after effectively declaring itself bankrupt amid concerns about how its previous accounts were approved.

The Labour-controlled local authority, the largest in Europe, said that it no longer had enough money to fund an £87 million gap in its budget while facing up to £760 million in equal pay legal claims.

The decision to issue a Section 114 notice, an acknowledgement that those in charge of Britain's second largest city can no longer balance the books, makes it the latest in a series of local authorities to financially collapse.

Announcing the decision to stop funding all but essential services, the leaders of Birmingham council pointed to the disastrous introduction of an IT system costing up to £100 million, five times the original budget.

This came on top of liabilities estimated at between £650 million and £760 million to compensate underpaid female employees following a landmark legal case that has already resulted in payouts of £1.1 billion.

The 2012 Supreme Court ruling upheld a previous ruling in favour of 174 female employees, such as cooks and cleaners, who complained that they did not receive the same pay and benefits as men working at the same grade.

In June the council said it was in talks with the government over how to fund the payouts, which were rising at a rate of £5 million to £14 million a month.

Rishi Sunak ruled against providing a bailout for the council in July when it announced spending controls on non-essential services, with the prime minister accusing its leaders of "financial mismanagement".

At a council cabinet meeting yesterday morning, it was revealed that auditors recently raised concerns that provisions for equal pay were "materially understated" in the past two years' accounts.

The council said the Section 114 notice was necessary to put it "back on a sound financial footing".

In a joint statement, John Cotton, the Labour council leader, and Sharon Thompson, the deputy leader, sought to blame funding cuts introduced by successive Conservative governments.

Comparing the situation to that faced by other local authorities, they said "unprecedented financial challenges" stemmed from inflation, adult social care demand and a reduction in business rates income.

However, Robert Alden, leader of the Birmingham Conservative group, said that Labour, which has been in control of the local authority since 2012, was failing to acknowledge its responsibility. "It is cloud cuckoo land to say that the problems in Birmingham are being replicated across the country," he said.

He pointed to how last year the council repeatedly hailed the start of a "golden decade" at a time when its finances were under serious strain. "It was fool's gold, it was lies to the public of Birmingham," Alden added.

Accusing Labour of "sheer arrogance", Roger Harmer, the Liberal Democrat group leader, said: "Every one of Birmingham's citizens will feel the pain of this decision as we move into uncharted waters."

Andy Street, the Conservative mayor of the West Midlands, described the notice as "deeply disturbing" and said that the council had failed to put forward a promised plan over how it would meet the equal pay bill. Cotton, who was criticised for not leading the announcement at yesterday's cabinet meeting due to being on a long-planned family holiday, later announced plans to close the equal pay liability by April 2025. He insisted he was "working around the clock" despite not being in Birmingham.

The longstanding Labour activist was chosen directly by Sir Keir Starmer's Labour Party rather than local councillors in May after an internal report raised concerns about a toxic culture within the local party. Downing Street said that an external review of Birmingham city council's plight ordered by ministers would report in the coming weeks.

Lee Rowley, the minister for local government, said that the Section 114 order was "hugely disappointing, but not unexpected" and said that council leaders should be transparent about how they would resolve the crisis.

Announcing the Section 114 order, Fiona Greenway, the council's interim finance director, said there were concerns about the ability of the council to face its financial challenges.

While the provision of statutory services will continue, such as education and refuse collection, it remains to be seen what other services could be cut.

Several councils including Slough, Croydon and Thurrock have asked for the government to bail them out in the past two years, while in June Woking council issued a Section 114 order amid an "unbridgeable" £1.2 billion funding deficit.

The decision will also raise questions about the council's funding of the European Athletics Championships, which is due to be held in the city in 2026.



John Cotton, the leader of Birmingham council, has been unable to balance the books only a year after the city hosted the Commonwealth Games



Councils in distress

Up to 26 cash-strapped councils in urban areas of Britain are at risk of triggering effective bankruptcy notices in the next two years, a recent report warned.

While the government has increased funding this year and next, experts say that years of cuts and rising costs have resulted in a £3 billion funding gap over the next two years. In an effort to address their dire finances, some councils are planning to strip funding while also having to use hundreds of millions in reserves.

A number of councils have been forced to trigger Section 114 notices in the past two years to address their inability to balance the books.

This began with the Labour-run Slough borough council in 2021, which said it had a £100 million funding hole linked to the mishandling of commercial investments. Following this, Croydon council in London effectively declared itself bankrupt for the third time in two years in November 2022.

Conservative-run Thurrock council in Essex has also issued a notice over its finances after being plagued by scandal linked to a series of speculative investments.

Woking council in Surrey issued a Section 114 notice in June after a series of risky investments linked to its former Conservative administration.

Feeling the cost of Supreme Court's ruling over equal pay

Behind the story

When the Supreme Court ruled in favour of 174 female former Birmingham city council employees in 2012, lawyers predicted that the decision would have "huge implications" (Mario Ledwith writes).

More than a decade on, the ramifications of the ruling appear to have come to a head as the Labour-controlled local authority effectively declared itself bankrupt.

The decision to issue a Section 114 notice, pausing funding to non-essential services, can be traced directly back to the ruling, which paved the way for female former employees to launch compensation claims against the authority.

However, Birmingham's financial collapse has also been partly attributed to years of Conservative government funding cuts to councils that have led other local authorities to plead for government bailouts in the past two years. Many others are on the brink.

When those arguments were reached for by Birmingham council's Labour leadership yesterday, political opponents said this was a feeble attempt to avoid blame after years of chaos within the party.

Allegations about a toxic culture within Birmingham Labour, which has controlled the council since 2012, including misogyny and bitter infighting, led the central party to step in earlier this year.

The report into the council was so concerning that the party's national leadership ruled it would step in and decide the city's next leader.

The former leader, Ian Ward, and his deputy, Brigid Jones, were culled, while the party's central leadership selected a long-serving activist, John Cotton, to steady the ship.

Already faced with the equal pay debacle, shortly after taking over Cotton revealed that the council's flagship Oracle IT system for payments and HR systems, which had been plagued by delays, could be five times over budget. The flawed system, which led to allegations of bailiffs turning up at schools, was meant to cost £19 million.

In a report to elected members of the council yesterday, the interim finance director, Fiona Greenway, raised concerns about the "ability of the council to address our financial position".

Following the Section 114 order, attention will turn to how services will run in the coming months.

Service provision within the local authority has been subject to constant criticism. A long-running strike left hundreds of bins uncollected every day and cost the council at least £5.8 million. The council attracted more scrutiny in 2016, following the Trojan Horse scandal, when it voted to oppose government plans to turn all schools into academies. Claims have also been made about alleged overspending on school transport, including allegations that it has paid vastly inflated fares for children with special educational needs and disabilities (Send).

Last November the government-appointed commissioner, John Coughlan, warned that improvements to Send services in the city were being held back by politics at the council.

It overshot its spending on school transport by £18 million last year.

In 2015, the council went ahead with the demolition of the city's brutalist Central Library despite pleas from campaigners and claims from the architectural community that it could be adapted.

French actress says she was victim of incest in new documentary

Adam Sage Paris



Emmanuelle Béart refuses to name her attacker in the programme

Emmanuelle Béart, the celebrated French actress, revealed she was a victim of incest as a teenager as she sought to lift a national taboo over the issue.

The *Manon des Sources* star made the shocking disclosure in a documentary which she co-directed and which will be broadcast on French television.

The programme, to be shown on the private M6 channel later this month, aims to highlight the extent of incest in France and a deep reluctance to address the issue in the courts and society.

Béart, 60, refused to reveal the identity of her attacker but said that it was not Guy, her late father, who was a celebrated singer-songwriter.

She described how the assaults started, addressing her attacker directly. "I am 11, it is night-time, I'm sure, you tear open my sleep. I am cold. No screams come out of my mouth. My mouth is stitched up."

"My father, my mother, my school, my friends see nothing. Everything can recommence and you recommence for four years."

In the documentary, she pays tribute to her grandmother for saving her.

"If my grandmother had not intervened, if she had not put me in a train to go to live with my father when I was 15, I don't know if I could have lived."

She said she had often told people what had happened to her. "I said it everywhere. There was no response. You go from person to person confessing a secret that devastates you and that does not mark people."

In an interview with Elle magazine, the actress, also known for such films as *Nelly & Monsieur Arnaud* and *Mission: Impossible*, said she had decided not to file a criminal lawsuit against her attacker because she "couldn't stand taking the risk of hearing it never happened".

She said three quarters of lawsuits involving incest allegations were dismissed by French justice.

Béart added: "I am not a victim and this is not a film on victims. It is a film on beings who have been victims and who are fighting. I consider that I have lived my life but that [incest] never leaves you, it never goes away."

Four other people also speak in the documentary about the incest they suffered as children. Béart said that like her, they were "survivors".

A poll in 2020 found that 10 per cent of French people were victims of incest. "In a class of 30 children, three have probably been sexually abused," said Béart. "It's a phenomenon of an incredible scope."

She said the documentary, entitled *Un Silence si Bruyant* (Such a Noisy Silence) had helped her talk about her own experience.

There is no specific offence of incest concerning adults in French law. Incestuous relations with a child under 18 is considered rape and carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

I didn't collude with Bashir, Diana's brother tells tribunal

David Brown

The BBC should be investigated for a criminal cover-up of the deceit used to obtain an interview with Diana, Princess of Wales, a tribunal was told.

The broadcaster apologised for failing to release documents after being accused of lying, having claimed that the disgraced journalist Martin Bashir was so unwell it could not make public damning evidence of his wrongdoing.

The late princess's brother also told the hearing that a senior BBC executive falsely claimed that he conspired with Bashir to persuade Diana to take part in the *Panorama* interview.

Earl Spencer, 59, gave evidence to the first tier information rights tribunal that rules on whether documents should be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

The scandal emerged after the BBC released a heavily redacted confidential briefing by Lord Hall of Birkenhead — head of news at the time and later director-general — to the broadcaster's governors in 1996. Hall suggested that Spencer gave Bashir bank statements which were altered by the journalist to fuel Diana's paranoia by falsely suggesting that her aides were being paid by tabloids.

Spencer was asked yesterday if it was true he had conspired with Bashir. He replied: "No I did not." He dismissed a suggestion made by a BBC executive at an earlier hearing that the allegation was already in the public domain when the broadcaster released Hall's briefing.

"I do not believe it was," he said: "It does not seem likely to me and I can't think why [the BBC] would say that."

Spencer told the tribunal that he contacted the BBC 17 years ago raising his own concerns about the interview "but nothing happened".

Hall's document was released to Andy Webb, who made a Channel 4 documentary for the 25th anniversary of the interview. The scandal caused by the documentary led to the BBC commissioning an investigation by Lord Dyson which concluded the broadcaster's executives covered up "deceitful behaviour" by Bashir.

Webb is seeking the release of further documents which he believes contain evidence of how the BBC continued to try and cover up the scandal.

Dyson's report revealed that the BBC failed to give Webb a 1996 report by Anne Sloman, another senior executive, which revealed there had been wrongdoing by Bashir. She concluded: "The Diana story is probably now dead, unless Spencer talks."

The corporation prepared a letter admonishing Bashir so it could claim to have taken action if the deceit emerged, but never actually sent it to him, the hearing was told.

Webb said that it was "discreditable and shameful" for senior BBC executives to create such a deceit. He said that years later a cell of senior executives "in a panic" decided to claim that Bashir was unwell so they could avoid releasing the document.

BBC executives wanted to "give this 1996 cover-up a new lease of life" to ensure "Martin Bashir would never be brought to the book", he said.

"I don't think Bashir was ill at all," he added. "He was not too ill to be in discussions on a daily basis on matters relating to this." He said that it is a criminal offence not to reveal documents as required under freedom of information law and "those who have done the concealing must face the consequences".

Jason Pobjoy, a barrister for the BBC, said that the broadcaster has written to the tribunal accepting the claim that Spencer colluded with Bashir was not in the public domain before it released Hall's briefing. He apologised for a failure in initial searches for documents and insisted the allegation of "concealment and of a cover up have no evidential basis". The hearing continues.



Earl Spencer, 59, gave evidence yesterday

GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY IMAGES



Seamless The actress Florence Pugh at the Elle Style Awards 2023 at the Old Sessions House, London. She won "British icon" and is on the October cover

High-profile stars keep Sussexes in the spotlight

Keiran Southern Los Angeles

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex have been spotted rubbing shoulders with A-list stars at several Hollywood events over the past few days, with experts saying it is important for the couple to stay in the public eye.

Harry, 38, and Meghan, 42, returned to the Los Angeles celebrity scene over the weekend with separate appearances. The duke attended an Inter Miami game on Sunday, watching Lionel Messi's team play against Los Angeles FC and chatting with the actor Will Ferrell. The actors Leonardo DiCaprio and Owen Wilson were also there.

On Monday night Meghan attended a Beyoncé concert at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, alongside Kelly Rowland, who was in Destiny's Child with Beyoncé, and the actress Kerry Washington — having already attended another of the singer's Los Angeles gigs on Friday, with Harry and her mother.

The Sussexes have largely had a year to forget in Hollywood, with their multimillion-dollar deal with Spotify coming to an end and doubts over their output at Netflix.

Stephen Galloway, the dean of Chapman University's film school, said it was important for the couple to be seen at events to bolster their celebrity status. "It's important to maintain them in the public eye," he said. "And this is why movies have premieres. This is why paparazzi are around."

The Sussexes moved to California more than three years ago. Their attempts to crack Hollywood have run into difficulties, however, and a Spotify executive called the couple "grifters" once their deal with the streaming giant came to an end in June.

That placed further scrutiny on their deal with Netflix. Harry recently released the *Heart of Invictus* documentary series, and the couple are adapting the romance novel *Meet Me at the Lake* for the screen. As well as questions over their producing prowess, there have been reports of a fallout with the Beckhams.

With their Hollywood careers still growing, the Sussexes must strike a delicate balance, Galloway believes. He said: "No 1 you need money. There is a big question about how much they have. No 2, you need mystery. Well, when you've written a book like Harry's memoir *Spare*, there's no mystery left. And three, you need some kind of news. There's not much news with them. So in the end, you become the moth fluttering around another light."

Softer rules — but turbines will

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor
Emily Gosden Energy Editor

Only a handful of onshore wind farms are likely to be built in England because the end of a de facto ban still leaves them harder to approve than other projects, experts said.

Changes to planning rules set out yesterday will make it harder for small groups to block new turbines, but industry leaders complained that wind farms would still be treated more stringently than other energy projects.

Conservative rebels had wanted wind turbines on land treated like other renewable schemes. Ministers rejected this, with updated planning guidance retaining a presumption against wind farms unless they have local consent.

However, councils have been given more ways to identify potential sites and told to allow online consultations, which could encourage younger voters to show their support.

Michael Gove, the communities secretary, said: "We need to strike the right balance to ensure that local authorities can respond more flexibly to suitable opportunities for onshore wind energy, contributing to electricity bill savings and increasing our energy security as well as respecting the views of their local communities."

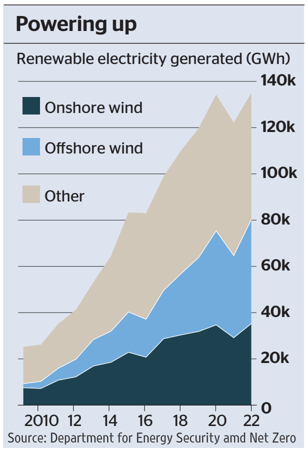
He added: "We hope that this will mean sites are identified more quickly, speeding up the process of allocating sites for onshore wind projects, and as a consequence more clean and renewable energy is generated sooner."

Rishi Sunak had promised reforms to the rules for onshore wind last year. They were fast-tracked after negotiations with Tory rebels, with Gove saying that "minor changes" had been made to the new policy.

Sir Alok Sharma, who has led the push for onshore wind, welcomed the changes, which have immediate effect. "I do understand that some would have liked an even more permissive planning regime, with onshore wind treated like any other infrastructure, but we have to recognise that this has been a contentious issue in the past," he said.

However, James Robottom of the industry body RenewableUK said: "We will still face a planning system stacked against onshore wind."

He added that the changes might "support a limited number of new developments", but described them as "a slight softening at the edges but nothing



more. As a result, we're not going to see investment into new onshore wind at the scale needed to rapidly cut bills and boost energy security."

Twenty-seven wind farms have been rejected since 2015 and the industry said these projects were unlikely to be revived as companies move on to other projects. Aurora Energy Research, a consultancy, suggested that only about 160 extra turbines could be built in England in the coming decades as a result of the relaxation of planning rules.

The consultancy said that about 650MW of onshore wind capacity could be built in England rather than Scotland, enough to power more than 400,000 homes. This would add about 5 per cent to UK onshore wind power capacity, but 20 per cent to England's.

Tom Smout, an expert on the British power market at Aurora Energy Research, said that although wind speeds were typically higher in the west of the country, it would expect a lot of wind projects to be in east England "because the lower population density means an easier time getting through planning, and cheaper land costs".

Ed Miliband, the shadow climate secretary, said ministers had "bottled it again on onshore wind. It still remains easier to build an incinerator or a landfill site than onshore wind. The planning system remains stacked against onshore wind. This will mean higher bills and energy insecurity for Britain."

Moves to lower the cost of clean energy are welcome, leading article, page 25


PDF NEWSPAPERS and MAGAZINES: WWW.XSAVA.XYZ

Labour's reshuffled team: Angela Rayner, deputy leader and shadow levelling-up secretary; Shabana Mahmood, shadow secretary; Rachel Reeves, shadow chancellor; Liz Kendall, shadow work and pensions secretary; Darren Jones, shadow

Rishi rides on winds of change

Analysis

As in so many policy areas, England's new rules for onshore wind farms are the result of Rishi Sunak's attempt to tread a path between warring Tory MPs (Chris Smyth writes).

Energy companies and green groups are protesting because, although a de facto ban is ending, the rules still presume against onshore wind unless community support can be demonstrated. This makes planning permission harder than for other projects.

Pro-wind Tories wanted to go further, but say they have to be realistic when many other backbenchers and activists remain sceptical. But there is no doubt that the balance of opinion has shifted. When the de facto ban was imposed in 2015, even an avowed moderniser like David Cameron could say that voters were "fed up" with "unsightly" turbines.

The surge in energy prices has caused many to look again at the cheapest and quickest form of domestic generation.

There remain practical questions about how many suitable sites there actually are in England, especially compared with the plentiful supply of remote, windy locations in Scotland. MPs have started to notice, however, that polling has shown voters back wind turbines near them. Even Tory voters support local wind farms by solid majorities — in principle at least. Many question whether voters will be so tolerant when presented with the actual prospect of turbines in the middle of their favourite view. But advocates believe the prospect of discounted energy bills will be a clear incentive.

Such direct local inducements are likely to be used for an increasing range of contentious developments. They are also backed by Labour, which sees a big expansion of infrastructure projects as a way to boost growth and draw a clear dividing line with the Tories.

Sunak has been reviewing climate policies after an Uxbridge by-election victory attributed to the expansion of the Ulez, and the energy bill was assailed by critics on the right who say that ending net zero commitments offer a route to election victory.

Others counter that wind power will bring down costs. Sir Simon Clarke, the former levelling up secretary, argues the Tories should pursue net zero "by harnessing the transformative power of new technology".

Sunak — not to mention Sir Keir Starmer — would probably agree. But, as on other green issues, Tory consensus is fragile. Should they lose the election, this debate will only intensify.

Badenoch is most popular minister among grassroots

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Kemi Badenoch has become the most admired member of the cabinet among Tory activists, a poll of the party's supporters suggests.

The business and trade secretary topped the Conservative Home poll of senior Tory politicians for the first time, following the departure of Ben Wallace as defence secretary.

She had a net positive approval of 59 per cent, ahead of Penny Mordaunt, leader of the Commons, on 47.5 per cent, and James Cleverly, the foreign secretary, on 44 per cent. Rishi Sunak returned to negative ratings following a brief bump from the Conservative by-election victory in Uxbridge & South Ruislip. He was on minus 3.8 points, down from 21 last month.

The poll is seen as a good snapshot of Tory grassroots opinion and an indication of the likely frontrunners in a leadership contest if Labour wins the next general election. Wallace had long been the favourite among activists but his departure cleared the way for Badenoch to top the table. Her popularity stems from her role negotiating trade deals and her stance on trans issues, which plays well with the party base.

Her rating of 59 per cent is far higher than that of Suella Braverman, who is



Kemi Badenoch has won popularity with trade deals

on 21 per cent. Gillian Keegan is down from 22 points to 10, while Michael Gove, Jeremy Hunt and Grant Shapps are all in negative territory. Robert Jenrick, the immigration minister, is at the bottom of the table. The poll was conducted last month.

still be hard to build, say experts

JORDAN PETTITT/PA



justice secretary; Sir Keir Starmer, party leader; Peter Kyle, shadow science chief secretary to the Treasury; Thangam Debbonaire, shadow culture secretary

Government 'needs extra £2bn to house migrants'

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

The Home Office will have to find an extra £2 billion a year because the government will no longer be allowed to use the foreign aid budget to pay for migrants in hotels, a watchdog said.

Powers created by Rishi Sunak's Illegal Migration Act will prevent the Home Office using Britain's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget to cover asylum costs. Last year the department spent £2.4 billion of the foreign aid budget on asylum costs, with £1.9 billion of it going towards housing tens of thousands of migrants in hotels.

However, a report by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), which scrutinises how the government spends its development budget, said that ministers will be blocked from diverting money from the budget to support the cost of migrant accommodation due to strict international rules.

This will "close off the main source of funding the government is using to house asylum seekers", the ICAI said.

The Home Office has abandoned its plans to use a military barracks in Rishi Sunak's constituency to house migrants, it emerged yesterday. The prime minister had claimed he was "showing leadership" earlier this year by including the Catterick Garrison barracks in his Richmond constituency in North Yorkshire among sites being repurposed to take migrants.

However, Sir Edward Leigh, the Conservative MP, said in the Commons yesterday that Home Office officials had informed him they had dropped the plans. Leigh asked: "Where's the leadership in that?"

Separately, Robert Jenrick, the immigration minister, said it will be several weeks before migrants will be moved back on to the Bibby Stockholm barge in Portland, Dorset, after 39 asylum seekers were removed from the vessel last month because of legionella bacteria found in the water supply.

Jenrick refused to rule out leaving the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) if the government's policy to send migrants to Rwanda is ruled unlawful by the Supreme Court. Following repeated calls from Conservative MPs to consider quitting the ECHR, Jenrick said: "I don't think we should take anything off the table."



More than 21,000 small boat migrants have crossed the Channel this year

Home Office figures showed that migrant crossings have continued this week, with 286 arriving in five boats on Monday. It took the total for the year to more than 21,000 — about 20 per cent lower than this time last year. Jenrick contrasted Britain's figures to those showing illegal migrants arriving into the EU had doubled this year.

Jenrick urged France to improve its interception rate, contrasting its 45.2 per cent rate of preventing migrants reaching UK waters with the 90 per cent interception rate by Belgium. He said France should emulate Belgium's practice of intercepting boats when they are in the water. The French authorities do not intervene when boats are in the water unless there is a request by those on board because they deem it too dangerous in accordance with international maritime law.

The number of migrants being housed in hotels is more than 50,000. Under Treasury rules, the government is able to count the first year of support for refugees and migrants in the UK as part of Britain's contribution to international development. However, the OECD development assistance committee, which governs countries' use of ODA, states that their aid budget must only be used for humanitarian purposes and not any form of coercion, such as detention or deportation.

The Illegal Migration Act, which was passed in parliament in July but has yet to be implemented, places a duty on the home secretary to detain and deport migrants who arrive in the UK illegally. It will also bar anyone who enters the UK illegally from claiming asylum.

As a result, the government will no longer be able to use its foreign aid budget to cover the cost of accommodating those migrants who arrive illegally.

The ICAI report said that even if migrants are not detained they would not be eligible for ODA-funded accommodation and support because they will be barred from receiving asylum in the country. It estimates that the amount of foreign aid money that the Home Office would be allowed to use to foot asylum costs would fall as low as £170 million per year, leaving the department having to fund the shortfall from its own budget.

Dr Tamsyn Barton, chief commissioner of the ICAI, said: "Our analysis of the aid rules suggests that the Illegal Migration Act, if fully implemented, could close off the main source of funding the government is using to house asylum seekers." Sarah Champion, the Labour MP who leads the Commons international development committee, described the finding as a "spectacular own goal" for the government.

A government spokeswoman said: "It is vital that we deter people from risking their lives in dangerous small boat crossings. The Illegal Migration Act will mean that people who come to the UK illegally will not have a right to stay.

"Instead they will be liable to be returned either to their home country or relocated to a safe third country, breaking the business model of people smugglers and stopping the unprecedented strain on our asylum system."

EU braced for asylum claims, page 26

Mortgage holders face £3,000 penalty

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

Mortgage holders face paying £3,000 more in repayments next year as rising interest rates deliver a £17 billion blow to homeowners, a think tank suggested.

The Resolution Foundation has calculated that homeowners will soon be paying the biggest proportion of their incomes on mortgages since before the financial crisis.

About half of homeowners have so far managed to avoid the huge rise in costs. However, the think tank estimated that hundreds of thousands of mortgage holders would be moving off their old fixed-rate deals over the next year. It estimates that up to 90 per cent of mortgage holders will have had to refix their deals at much worse rates by the time of the general election, likely to be in 2024, by which time annual average repayments will have risen by £3,000.

The Bank of England's base rate has jumped from 0.1 per cent in November 2021 to 5.25 per cent and is expected to peak at 5.5 per cent by the end of this month. The jump in borrowing costs will mean that the average household with a mortgage will be spending 16 per cent of their total income on their housing loan in 2025, the highest proportion since 2008.

"The worst of the cost of living crisis may be behind us, but except for those with significant savings, it is stagnant living standards rather than boomtime Britain that the future has in store," Adam Corlett, principal economist at the Resolution Foundation, said.

The think tank predicted that the UK's poorest households would suffer from another year of falling real incomes as government benefits to help with the cost of living crisis end and the tax burden rises. Households on the lowest incomes will suffer a 1 per cent drop in disposable incomes, pushing 300,000 more people into poverty.

Overall living standards are due to stagnate in 2024, a slight improvement on falling real incomes recorded in the past two years as inflation has eaten away at people's pay packets. Consumer price inflation has fallen from a peak of 11.1 per cent last October to 6.8 per cent in July, but still remains more than three times the Bank's target rate.

In an attempt to rein in inflation, the Bank's monetary policy committee has raised borrowing costs aggressively to make investment and hiring more expensive for companies and reduce demand for goods and services.

Rising rates mean borrowers must pay more to service debts but savers, collectively, stand to make £90 billion from higher interest next year.

The foundation said that the savings boost was the equivalent of £3,000 per household in the UK, but the benefits would be felt mainly by older people with larger savings. Households with the lowest savings will gain only about £100 from higher rates.

"Households aged 65-74 are set to gain six times as much, on average, as those 35 and under, while two thirds of the entire windfall next year will accrue to the tenth of households with the most savings — receiving £20,000 each on average," the think tank said.

The Truss experiment was always doomed, Daniel Finkelstein, page 21

Healthcare entrepreneur's £5m donation to Tories

Oliver Wright

A healthcare entrepreneur whose company has millions of pounds of public sector contracts has given the Conservative Party one of its largest ever donations.

Frank Hester, founder and chief executive of The Phoenix Partnership (TPP), has given the party £5 million, in the latest big donation since Rishi Sunak became prime minister.

In June it was announced that Mohamed Mansour, the Egyptian-born billionaire, had also given the Tories £5 million, then the party's biggest single donation since 2001. Alan Howard, the hedge fund founder, also gave £1 million to the party this year.

Hester's company, founded in 1997, provides IT services to the NHS and other healthcare systems that allow hospitals to share electronic healthcare records of patients securely. During the pandemic it was reported to have won a six-figure contract to supply data on vaccine uptake levels.

TPP also gave the Conservatives £145,000 this year. At the time the company said the money should have been registered as a personal donation.

"TPP strictly follows the guidelines for public sector contracting," it said. "In regards to the donations, these should have been made by Frank Hester in his personal capacity rather than through the business. Mr Hester repaid the company in full. For absolute clarity, TPP is unequivocally apolitical."

The Mirror reported that TPP has met government figures three times since July last year, including a sit-down with Steve Barclay, the health secretary, to discuss technology and product developments in healthcare.

Hester, who was awarded an OBE in 2015 for services to healthcare, is estimated to be worth £415 million by The Sunday Times Rich List, ranking him in joint 321st place.

OLIVER DIXON



Bursts of colour A horticulturalist at RHS Wisley, in Surrey, admires some of the dahlias at the annual flower show. The event, which runs until Sunday, includes more than 100 competition classes for dahlias

£10 for book of stamps as postage prices rise again

Tom Witherow

A book of first-class stamps will cost £10 after Royal Mail raised prices for the second time in six months, despite failing to hit its delivery targets.

Yesterday the company announced that it would increase the price of a first-class stamp from £1.10 to £1.25 from October 2, a rise of 14 per cent.

The increase means that the price of a first-class stamp is now 30p, or 31 per cent, higher than it was in March, an increase of more than four times the rate of inflation.

The price of a large letter going first class will rise by 35p, more than 20 per cent, and a second-class large letter will cost an extra 40p, an increase of more than 33 per cent.

The earlier price increases were in April, just before Simon Thompson resigned as chief executive with a £650,000 payoff after a war with the unions.

Yesterday the union representing more than 100,000 Royal Mail staff accused the company of trying to run down its letters business, which it is required to operate six days a week under the universal service obligation (USO).

Recent financial results showed that the number of letters posted in the UK had fallen by 30 per cent compared with before the pandemic.

Andy Furey, acting deputy general secretary of the Communications Workers' Union, said: "Royal Mail wants to focus on products outside the USO, as they are more lucrative. [It's] gross mismanagement to allow a situation whereby they are in a crisis, especially as it was only last year when they paid money to shareholders."

Yesterday Ofcom, which regulates Royal Mail, suggested that the future of Saturday deliveries could be at risk. In a statement it said that the service "might need to evolve to more closely meet consumer needs".

So far the Department for Business and Trade has rejected calls for reform. In June it blocked a plan to stop delivering post on Saturdays.

Separately, Ofcom is investigating Royal Mail for failing to meet its statutory targets in 2022-23, and last week The Times revealed that the company had failed to hit its delivery targets in every UK postcode this summer.

Households in postage blackspots said that they were waiting up to two weeks for deliveries.

The delays are also putting NHS trusts under strain as missed hospital appointments become a "continuous occurrence", and senior management are considering alternative methods to ensure patients receive notifications.

Horizon investigation work is farmed out to Australia

Tom Witherow

Post Office lawyers have admitted using graduates as far away as Australia to sift through documents after the company was accused of withholding thousands of items from the inquiry into the Horizon accounting scandal.

Postmaster victims said that they had been "retraumatised" by the Post Office's failure to release 4,767 documents until July — over a year after they were requested.

The public inquiry seeks to uncover how the government-owned company prosecuted hundreds of its own branch owner-managers between 1999 and 2015 when glitches in the Horizon computer system were to blame.

Sir Wyn Williams, the chairman of the inquiry, said the failure to release them potentially posed a "very significant stumbling block in my search for answers", and threatened Post Office officials with criminal sanctions if there were further failures. Yesterday, at a special hearing, the top City law firm employed to advise the Post Office at the inquiry, Herbert Smith Freehills (HSF), admitted that the process was partly outsourced to the other side of the world to staff who did not have full legal qualifications.

Gregg Rowan, a partner at the firm, said that the "alternative legal services" team was primarily made up of law graduates and staff were based in Belfast, Johannesburg and, more recently, Australia, The Lawyer reported.

"You've got these people in other parts of the world, graduated in law and not legally qualified, making decisions on whether family documents get reviewed or not," Jason Beer KC, counsel to the inquiry, said.

The Post Office said that it had given "broad general authority" to HSF to ensure documents were released to the inquiry but denied taking a "laissez faire" approach. The missing documents have led to some inquiry hearings being pushed back.



Shoplifting isn't seen as a crime now, warns supermarket boss

William Mata

Shoplifting "is just not seen as a crime any more", the chairman of Asda has said after a rising number of thefts from supermarkets.

Lord Rose of Monewden has said he wants more to be done to tackle the problem.

Figures from the Co-op indicate that the police fail to respond to 71 per cent of serious retail crimes reported by the company. The data, obtained through a freedom of information request and published in July, also showed that incidents of violent and abusive behaviour towards retail staff had doubled since before the pandemic.

Rose, who has also been the executive chairman of Marks & Spencer, said yesterday that lawlessness had been on the rise "because we allowed it to happen" and that shoplifting had "become decriminalised".

He told LBC radio: "It has become minimised … It's actually just not seen as a crime any more. The police have got lots of other things to do, although Suella Braverman [the home secretary] now says that all crime will be investigated, so let's see."

The Co-op has recorded a 35 per cent surge in crime cases this year compared with last year, and Matt Hood, managing director of Co-op Food, said last month that the level of shoplifting was "out of control", with some shops at risk of closure.

Meanwhile, Ken Murphy, Tesco's chief executive, said at the weekend that the supermarket's staff now wore body cameras to deter offenders.

Rose has ruled out this type of action for Asda, to avoid "everybody photographing everybody", but said other measures would be introduced to keep staff safe.

He added: "We should make it very clear to people coming into shops that if we catch them stealing things, we will prosecute them."

Braverman said last week that it was unacceptable that some incidents were being treated as "less important" by the police. Forces should follow all reasonable lines of inquiry, she added.

Chris Philp, the policing minister, said on Monday that all reports of shoplifting should be investigated, even if the goods stolen were worth less than £200.

"The law says that this is still a criminal offence and police should be enforcing it comprehensively," he told The Daily Telegraph.

Peaty in altercation with team-mate

Ali Mitib, Craig Lord







Adam Peaty with facial cuts; Luke Greenbank and Anna Hopkin, above; and Peaty with his girlfriend Holly Ramsay

A winner of three Olympic gold medals for swimming who suffered a facial injury in an altercation with a fellow Team GB athlete has played down any suggestions of a rift between them.

Adam Peaty, 28, who has also won eight world championships, was involved in an incident with Luke Greenbank, 25, during a Team GB camp at the British Swimming training centre in Loughborough on Friday.

The incident is understood to have taken place after Peaty made a comment to Greenbank.

A photo emerged yesterday that showed Peaty with two gashes above his left eye, amid reports that he slapped his team-mate on the bottom and made a "cocky quip" about Greenbank's partner, Anna Hopkin, 27, a member of Britain's Olympic gold medal-winning mixed medley relay with Peaty, Kathleen Dawson and James Guy in Tokyo two years ago.

However, Peaty told The Times that the two swimmers had buried the hatchet and that he did not mention Hopkin before the incident.

He said: "Me and Luke are fine. We had a moment and then shook hands immediately after some tension after a hard training set. I have no idea how Anna got dragged into this. I didn't even mention Anna and it's unfair on her."

A representative for Peaty told The Times that there had been a "disagreement" between Adam and Greenbank that resulted in a "minor injury" for Peaty. A source who witnessed the incident said: "There were no punches, let alone stitches. There wasn't even any slapping. Adam made a remark that Greenbank objected to, picked up a piece of training equipment and threw it at Adam. The cut wasn't intentional."

It is believed that a plastic hand paddle might have caused the cut above Peaty's eye. A source close to Peaty said: "Honestly, it's been blown out of proportion. They train together every day. It was just a heated moment that was resolved immediately after."

British Swimming, the sport's national governing body, considered the matter closed. A spokesman for the organisation said: "An incident occurred at a recent training session that was quickly and effectively resolved."

Peaty is widely regarded as one of the most dominant breaststroke swimmers in the history of the sport. He holds the world record for 50m and 100m breaststroke and was unbeaten in either event from 2014 to 2022.

He won the 100m breaststroke at the Rio de Janeiro Games in 2016 and the golds in the 100m breaststroke and the 4x100m mixed medley, with Greenbank and Hopkin, at the Tokyo Games in 2021.

Peaty and Greenbank won a silver medal together in the men's 4x100m medley at the Toyko Games.

Caroline Peaty, Peaty's mother, denied to Mail Online that her son was aggressive, and insisted that he and Greenbank were good friends.

Peaty, who is dating Holly Ramsay, daughter of the chef Gordon Ramsay, withdrew from the British Championships in April citing mental health matters. He later told The Times that he had been on a "self-destructive spiral".

He told BBC Breakfast in May that he remained hopeful of competing at next year's Paris Olympics, but that competing and succeeding in France would not solve his problems.

"A good friend of mine said a gold medal is the coldest thing you will ever wear. It's the coldest thing because you think it will fix all of your problems. It will not," he said.

Team GB and Greenbank did not respond to a request for comment.

Couple 'tortured and murdered pensioner for bank card pin'

David Brown

A frail pensioner was repeatedly robbed by a young couple before they broke into her house and stripped and strangled her so they could plunder her bank account, the Old Bailey was told.

Susan Hawkey, 71, was allegedly robbed twice by Chelsea Grant, 28, and her boyfriend Xyaire Howard, 23, as she walked home having withdrawn cash from her post office account.

During one robbery they stole her keys which they twice used to enter her home in Neasden, northwest London, and terrorise her, the court was told.

Annabel Darlow KC, for the prosecution, said the lovers identified Hawkey as an "ideal victim". The pensioner lived an isolated life with little contact with friends and family and was also a "creature of habit" and would take the same route to her local post office.

Her decomposing body was found hidden under a duvet in the living room 20 days after she was last seen alive in September last year. She had been tied up, with her hands taped and tied behind her back, her eyes had been taped shut and a ligature knotted around her neck. Her lower clothing, including her underwear, had been removed and her upper clothing had been cut.

Darlow said: "The evidence indicates that Susan Hawkey had committed her [bank card] pin to memory and would not have given the pin to anyone — still less two people who had robbed her three times before — unless she was the victim of considerable violence and aggression. The ligature around Susan Hawkey's neck had been tightened with sufficient force to break one of the bones in her neck," she added.

"They wanted to stop Susan Hawkey from blocking the card and prevent her from reporting them to the police for the multiple crimes they had already committed against her."

The couple went on a "massive spending spree" over the next three weeks and "burnt their way through almost £13,000" in 146 transactions, the court was told. They allegedly bought luxury goods, including perfume and designer goods. Both defendants allegedly sent money to St Vincent and the Grenadines, in the Caribbean.

Howard searched Google for "Barclays transaction limit" and Grant typed in the search phrases "can you smell a dead body from outside the house", it is claimed.

The couple, both of Neasden, deny murder and robbery charges. Howard has admitted one robbery charge and both have pleaded guilty to fraud by false representation in relation to their misuse of Hawkey's bank card.

The trial continues.

News

Wagner Group to be proscribed in Britain as a terrorist organisation

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

The Wagner group will be proscribed as a terrorist organisation today as part of a crackdown on the Russian network of mercenaries.

The ban will make it illegal to be a member or support the group in the UK, putting it on a par with Islamic State and al-Qaeda, with a penalty of up to 14 years in jail. Proscription will also make it easier to seize the organisation's assets as they can be categorised as terrorist property.

Members of the group, a proxy military force for the Russian state, will be barred from using courts in the UK to silence journalists and campaigners.

Suella Braverman, the home secretary, will introduce secondary legislation to declare Wagner a terrorist group in parliament today, in a move expected to be backed by the main political parties. Wagner has operated



The organisation is in effect an arm of the Kremlin

in several countries, most notably Ukraine and Syria, and as a Russian military proxy in parts of Africa. Braverman said: "Wagner is a violent and destructive organisation which has acted as a military tool of Vladimir Putin's Russia overseas. While Putin's regime decides what to do with the monster it created, Wagner's destabilising activities only continue to serve the Kremlin's political goals."

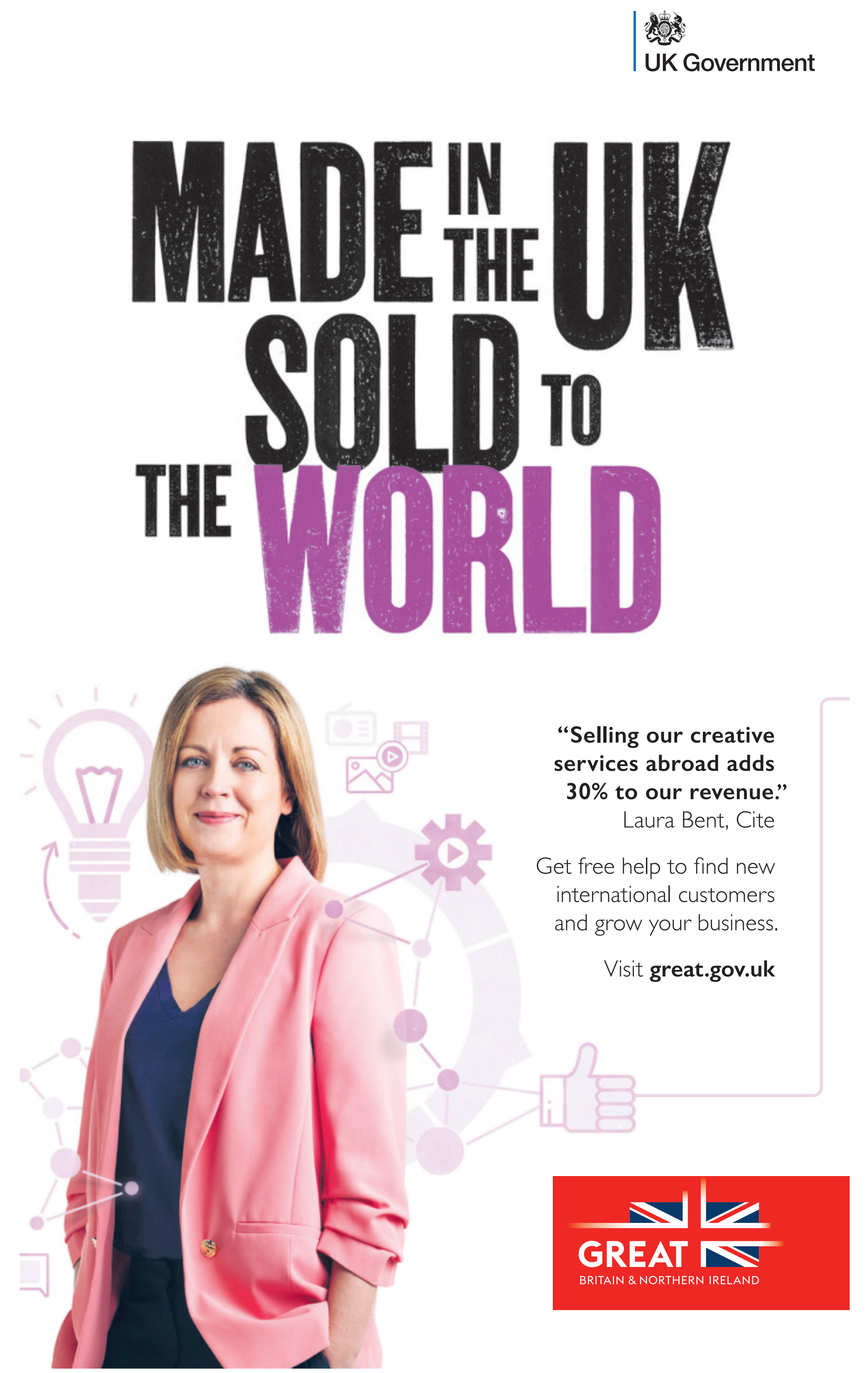
Proscription will boost the UK's relations with President Zelensky after a patchy period during which Ben Wallace, the former defence secretary, criticised the Ukrainian president for using the US and the UK as an "Amazon" delivery service for weapons.

The UK's proscription is seen as unprecedented because Wagner is in effect an arm of the Russian state. President Putin admitted in July that the Wagner group was fully funded by the Kremlin and had received tens of billions of roubles in public money over the previous year. Although it had always been clear that Wagner played a key role for Putin in Ukraine and Africa, it was technically a private army. Putin also revealed that Wagner mercenaries had been invited to sign contracts with Russia's defence ministry.

Efforts to proscribe the group had been delayed by this development because blacklisting Wagner would amount to proscribing an agency of the Russian government, and involve diplomatic and legal complications, according to government sources.

The mutiny by Yevgeny Prigozhin, Wagner's chief who was killed in a plane crash last month, had also complicated the Home Office's plans.

The case for proscribing an organisation must undergo thorough legal and security scrutiny, with Home Office lawyers and MI5 and MI6 understood to have spent months considering the nature and scale of Wagner's activities.



Detention 'an assault on free press'

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

The publisher of The Wall Street Journal has criticised Russia over its continued detention of Evan Gershkovich, a reporter who was arrested on espionage charges in March.

Almar Latour said that the persecution of Gershkovich, 31, was the latest attempt to stamp out a free press in Russia. Latour cited research from the Committee to Protect Journalists, a US-based non-profitmaking group, which found that a record number of journalists were imprisoned worldwide last year, with at least 67 journalists and media workers killed, the most since 2018.

"Evan's wrongful detention is a harsh reminder of what is at stake in a world where authoritarian forces in Europe and beyond have rolled back hard-fought gains of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law," he said. "Attacks on journalists ... are part of their strategy because without a free press, there is no free society."

Gershkovich was arrested in Russia on March 29 and accused of espionage by the Federal Security Service, a claim that has been denied by The Wall Street Journal and the Biden administration.

Latour, who is Dutch, made his comments in Die Welt, the German newspaper, as he said the country has become a "beacon of freedom" since the Berlin Wall fell more than 30 years ago.

Quintagram® No 1726

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Capital of South Korea (5)

_ _ _ _ _

2 Regal chair (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

3 Wallops, thumps (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

4 Service of morning prayer (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

5 Removing programming errors (9)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

A	B	C	D	E	E	E	G
G	G	H	I	I	L	L	M
N	N	N	O	O	O	R	S
S	S	T	T	T	U	U	U

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

Bridge crash fatality

One person has died and another driver is in a critical condition after a 52-seat coach and a car collided on the Cleddau Bridge in Pembroke Dock, southwest Wales. Ten passengers on the coach were also treated for injuries. The Mid and West Wales fire service said crews from Pembroke Dock, Milford Haven, Haverfordwest, Tenby and Narberth were called to the scene, as were the air ambulance and Dyfed-Powys police, in what was described as a major incident.

Helicopter report

An investigation into the helicopter crash that killed Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha, the owner of Leicester City football club, and four others, has found that Eric Swaffer, the pilot, lost control when a bearing broke and his pedals became disconnected from the tail rotor, causing a "catastrophic" spin. The report ruled out pilot error.

Police sex act case

A male police officer allegedly performed a sex act in front of a female officer at a police chief's party, a hearing was told. James Senior, a former detective chief inspector at Thames Valley police, is accused of failing to report Anish Sharma. Senior denies allegations of gross misconduct. Sharma denies sexual assault or exposure.

Don't ring for tax help

Taxpayers should not phone HMRC for help with the "simplest of tasks", a Treasury minister said. Victoria Atkins was challenged in the Commons over what was described as "appalling" customer service. Figures released at the weekend showed that in the past year there were 38 million calls to the tax helpline, of which ten million went unanswered.

Goulding 'ultimatum'

The singer Ellie Goulding, 36, has ended her close friendship with Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park after her estranged husband, the art dealer Caspar Jopling, "issued an ultimatum" for her to stop seeing the Tory peer to give their marriage a second chance, a source told the Daily Mail. Goldsmith, 48, declined to comment.

Empty auditoriums as concrete troubles hit theatres

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Comedians always aim to bring the house down — but not literally. The threat of falling masonry has caused a comedy venue in Northampton to close after reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac) was found.

The discovery at the Royal & Derngate affects performances by Miriam Margolyes, Gyles Brandreth, Tim Vine and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. All 24 events scheduled for this month have been postponed.

Staff have been told to work from home amid concerns for their safety, echoing the fears of the concrete crisis that has affected at least 156 schools — including the town's Northampton International Academy.

Jo Gordon, chief executive of Royal & Derngate, apologised for the disruption. "We are deeply saddened by this discovery and to have to close our doors at this time, particularly as September is usually an incredibly busy and important time for the theatre," she said.

"We are keenly aware of the disappointment that this will cause to audiences, visiting companies and our staff alike, though we know they'll understand that their safety is always our primary concern."

Gordon asked for patience as the theatre addressed the problem. The lightweight concrete was discovered in the foyer of the theatre, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Staff are working closely with West Northamptonshire council, the landlords, to plan remedial work. Ticketholders are being offered exchanges or refunds.

The Royal & Derngate houses two theatres — the Derngate auditorium, which has a capacity of 1,500 and the Royal theatre, which seats 450.

Raac has also been found in the Northampton Filmhouse Cinema that Royal & Derngate operates, resulting in its closure.

Other institutions have also been affected. The National Theatre in London said it had found Raac in a number of backstage areas, prompting it to call in experts.

"Our structural engineers are in the process of surveying these areas, initial indications are that they are safe and do not currently require remedial works," it said in a statement.

The YMCA theatre in Scarborough reopened yesterday after closing part of its building on Monday when a crack was spotted.

Liam Downey, the general manager, said a structural engineer had confirmed that the concrete used was not Raac. He said: "While we apologise for the inconvenience, we do not apologise for keeping you safe."

Last night a number of smaller regional theatres including, The Orchard in Dartford and The Core in Solihull, were forced to close their doors pending investigation of Raac.



The Royal & Derngate theatre in Northampton has had to postpone shows with the comedian Tim Vine and others

Now get off your backsides, Keegan tells school leaders

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor
Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Gillian Keegan angered head teachers with her second blunder in two days after saying those who had not responded to a survey on defective concrete should "get off their backsides".

It came as a YouGov poll found that only 17 per cent of all voters, and 29 per cent of Conservative voters, thought the government was handling the concrete crisis well.

Labour is forcing a vote today to attempt to make ministers release internal government documents showing what Rishi Sunak knew about the risks to schools when he cut the school rebuilding programme when chancellor. Tory MPs will be whipped to vote against the motion.

More than 150 schools in England have been identified as having buildings with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac), which poses a risk of collapse, and many have had to close buildings, classrooms or an entire site.

A questionnaire has been sent to all schools asking if they believe their premises contain the substance but 5 per cent have not replied.

The education secretary said yesterday that publicity about the situation should make school leaders "get off their backsides" and fill out the survey by the end of the week. She told Jeremy Vine on BBC Radio 2: "We've written to them quite a few times and we've also set up a call centre to phone them up to ask them to do it and they still haven't."

On Monday she apologised for swearing, when saying she had done a "f***ing good job" while others had "sat on their arse and done nothing".

Head teachers, who have had to find temporary teaching spaces or replace classroom lessons with remote learning, were unimpressed. Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "This is the education secretary's second display of petulance in consecutive days and isn't very helpful. Schools have been expected to identify Raac even though this is a specialist field and [they] are unlikely to have staff who are experts in this area. They have received minimal help from the Department for Education."

The prime minister's official spokesman said: "I think we would agree that it is important that all schools, as 95 per cent or more have already done so, fill out this survey so we can provide further reassurance."

Jonathan Slater, the former permanent secretary at the Department for Education, claimed on Monday that Sunak had halved the number of new schools that would get funding to repair unsafe buildings, despite the department having asked for this to double.

This has been denied by Downing Street, which insisted Sunak was not specifically made aware of Raac's risks.

Labour will use a parliamentary tactic known as a humble address that would force ministers to publish all submissions made by the Department for Education (DfE) to the Treasury and all advice and correspondence on the subject.

Bridget Phillipson, the shadow education secretary, said Tory MPs would have to choose whether to try to vote down the motion or "give parents the right to know about who is responsible for this mess".

A Downing Street source insisted Sunak had nothing to hide, claiming that the department had submitted a request for funding for school repairs without flagging the Raac problem.

Kent county council told The Times that the closure of two primary schools yesterday was triggered by a letter from the DfE, which said affected buildings should be vacated immediately, and had caused confusion about whether appropriate actions were in place. The schools have since reopened.

"Sticking plaster", letters, page 24

DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES



Gillian Keegan angered head teachers with her choice of language as she urged them to complete a survey on the presence of Raac in their buildings

Surveyors checking parliament buildings

Oliver Wright

Tests are being carried out to determine whether buildings within the Houses of Parliament contain the crumbling concrete that has closed schools across the country.

Surveyors are beginning the process of seeing if any parts of the parliamentary estate have reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac) within their fabric.

Although the most recognisable parts of parliament were rebuilt in the 19th century after they were destroyed by a fire, the overall estate has been much altered and added to since then.

The fear is that some of the newer additions could have the suspect concrete, which has been found in hospitals, courts and other public buildings. If detected, its presence would add to a growing list of problems facing parliament, including crumbling masonry, leaks and out-of-date electrical wiring.

Concerns have also been raised about the presence of asbestos and the "constant" fire risk in parliament.

In May the Commons public accounts committee said that despite a broad consensus on the critical need to repair and restore the Palace of Westminster, progress had been painfully slow. It also criticised the "years of procrastination"on building works.

Last year a body commissioned to produce estimates for a full-scale restoration found that it could cost as much as £22 billion.

Jeremy Quin, the Cabinet Office minister, is leading cross-departmental work looking into the possible existence of Raac in other public buildings.

There is no central register that sets out where the material has been used and Downing Street said there were no plans to publish a full list of public buildings that contain it.

Successive governments have shied away from committing themselves to a restoration plan for parliament, not least because of the high costs involved.

However, experts have suggested that maintenance costs to keep the building usable are inefficient and the cheapest option would be for MPs and peers to move out while a full restoration was carried out.


THE GREENER
IT GETS,
THE COOLER
IT BECOMES
BEFORE
AFTER
JUSTDIGGIT
COOLING DOWN THE PLANET
We are regreening African landscapes to cool down the planet.
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Musk vows to sue anti-hate group over lost revenue

Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

Elon Musk has threatened to sue the US-based Anti-Defamation League, which he claims is trying to "kill" his social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

The ADL has been highlighting what it believes is the rise of antisemitism on Twitter/X since Musk took it over.

Its report in May cited more than 5,000 examples from February of "virulent antisemitism from 2,173 accounts" on the site and has raised concerns about the return of banned neo-Nazis under Musk's policy of allowing more freedom of speech.

In a series of posts on Monday, Musk said "Since the acquisition, The @ADL [Anti-Defamation League] has been trying to kill this platform by falsely accusing it and me of being antisemitic."

The company's advertising revenue in the United States was down 60 per cent, which he said was "primarily due to pressure on advertisers by the ADL".

"To clear our platform's name on the matter of antisemitism, it looks like we have no choice but to file a defamation lawsuit against the Anti-Defamation League … oh the irony!" Musk said.

He accused the group of "destroying half the value of the company, so roughly $22 billion" and of making "unfounded accusations" that caused controversy and led advertisers to pause working with X.

"Advertisers avoid controversy, so all that is needed for ADL to crush our US and European ad revenue is to make unfounded accusations. They have much less power in Asia, so our ad revenue there is still strong.

"This 'controversy' causes advertisers to 'pause', but that pause is permanent until ADL gives the green light, which they will not do without us agreeing to secretly suspend or shadowban any account they don't like."

He added: "To be super clear, I'm pro free speech, but against antisemitism of any kind."

The hashtag #BanTheADL began to trend on Twitter/X last week after Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL director, met Linda Yaccarino, the social media company's chief executive, about hate speech on the platform, and tweeted that the meeting was "frank and productive".

Those on the far right were alarmed by the meeting, with Keith Woods, an Irish YouTuber, tweeting: "We all supported @elonmusk in his promise to restore free speech, but there is no hope of a free platform that collaborates with this anti-white hate group. Elon needs to listen to the people and stand up to the ADL!"

Musk liked a tweet from Woods that claimed the ADL was "financially blackmailing social media companies into removing free speech on their platform".

The ADL, which describes itself as the world's leading anti-hate organisation, has previously been at loggerheads with Musk over the reinstatement of Donald Trump on Twitter/X and his characterisation of George Soros as a supervillain.

Musk has already shown his readiness to sue civil rights groups which he blames for scaring away advertisers, having taken legal action against the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH).The lawsuit against CCDH in California is not for defamation, but over breach of contract.

The ADL said it did not comment on legal threats, but a spokesman said of #BanTheADL: "Such insidious efforts don't daunt us. Instead, they drive us to be unflinching in our commitment to fight hate in all its forms and ensure the safety of Jewish communities and other marginalised groups."



Elon Musk says false accusations have hit the value of Twitter/X

JAMES SPEAKMAN FOR THE TIMES



Tears as museum hands back artefacts

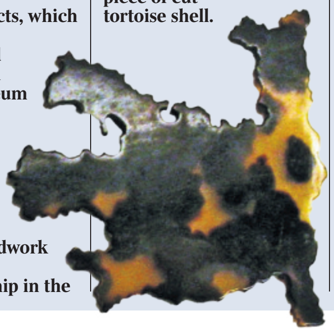
Manchester Museum has returned its largest number of objects to Australia in an emotional ceremony with indigenous people, calling for cultural institutions to "recognise harm but also encourage healing" (Constance Kampfner writes).

The 174 artefacts, which include dolls, boomerangs and spears, had been held in the museum since the 1960s. Professor Peter Worsley, a British anthropologist, amassed the collection while undertaking fieldwork for his PhD on Aboriginal kinship in the early 1950s. Many had never been on display.

Tears and traditional music accompanied a handover ceremony attended by representatives of the Anindilyakwa people. They had travelled to Manchester from Groote Eylandt, an island off the northern mainland. Esme Ward, the museum's director, said it was "essential for the present and future of our museums" for them to acknowledge their "colonial beginnings . . . in ways that recognise harm, but also encourage healing".

One of the objects is a piece of cut tortoise shell.





Deborah Worsley and Amethea Mamarika met as items such as shell dolls, above, and a Groote Eylandt map, below, cut from a tortoise shell, were returned

For years it had puzzled curators at the museum. "We went to Groote Eylandt and showed a group of ladies a picture of it," Georgina Young, head of exhibitions and collections, said. "They turned the paper around and said, 'Well that's the outline of this island'.

"It was so obvious to them yet no one here in Manchester would ever realise that because we'd never been on the land."

"We feel happy to be reunited," Noleen Lalara, senior elder of the Anindilyakwa people, said. "Thank you so much to Manchester Museum for looking after our artefacts. I'm a bit emotional."

Lalara came with two other women from the community. She became emotional as she handed a gift to the museum, later embracing Deborah Worsley, Professor Worsley's daughter.

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has called on other British institutions — including the British Museum and V&A — to examine 32,000 sacred indigenous Australian objects they hold.

Fears that big tech companies will take over AI safety conference

Mark Sellman

The first international AI safety conference, being hosted by Britain at Bletchley Park in November, is in danger of being "captured" by big tech companies, experts have warned.

The meeting was conceived by Rishi Sunak to address fears about the threat that AI could pose to humanity, and is due to be attended by politicians, civil society groups, tech companies and academics.

This week the government laid out its objectives for the conference, which will focus on "the most powerful AI systems" that could, for example, "undermine biosecurity".

Before the conference, Michelle Donelan, the technology secretary, spoke out on the issue of social media companies' responsibilities concerning underage children's accounts. She said yesterday that she wanted the likes of Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and TikTok to deactivate the profiles of under-13s or face large fines. She told The Daily Telegraph that otherwise "the mental toll and the ramifications for these young people is unimaginable".

The Online Safety Bill will return to parliament today for its final readings. Proponents have said that it will aim to protect children from harmful content.

AI experts have warned that large-language models such as ChatGPT could be adapted by malevolent forces to make bioweapons. Britain is keen to help strike a deal with the top AI companies that enhances safety, but some observers have warned against "regulatory capture" by big tech.

Sunak has met the leaders of OpenAI, Google Deepmind and Anthropic in recent months. Huw Roberts, an expert in AI regulation from the Oxford Internet Institute, said working closely with these "frontier labs" would give the conference a different focus from other AI talks, such as at the G7.

However, he warned: "The main negative of the focus is that it's clear big tech has captured the UK's agenda and framing. I anticipate that the governance proposals discussed will largely be drawn from big tech or big tech-adjacent work." He said this could leave the talks to be a "rubber stamping" of proposals developed by big tech.

Max Tegmark, a professor of physics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and president of the Future of Life Institute, said working too closely with big tech was like doing an event on regulating smoking and "the only invites are CEOs of tobacco companies".

Others experts believe that working closely with big tech is essential. Benedict Macon-Cooney, chief policy strategist at the Tony Blair Institute, said: "This is the most important technology of our lifetime. It is critical that those at the frontier, who understand [it] better than anyone, are fully engaged in the process.They are essential partners in helping shape the future."

A government spokesman said: "It is right that we engage a range of stakeholders on this issue."

All jobs 'will involve AI', page 29

GUY CORBISHLEY/ALAMY



Sisters of no mercy **The Millennium Bridge in London is beset by demonic religious figures promoting the horror film The Nun II, which is released on September 8**

Longer wait for food bin collections

Shayma Bakht

Food waste could go uncollected for a fortnight to accommodate the four-day working week adopted by a council.

More than 100,000 households in South Cambridgeshire will no longer have their bins collected on Mondays following the extension of the district council's shortened working week experiment, which started in January.

About 80 per cent of households are expected to be affected, and some households may have to wait more than two weeks for food waste to be removed.

The Liberal Democrat-run council has advised residents to take their waste to a household recycling centre if it is not collected as usual.

The council, which is the first in the UK to adopt a three-day weekend, voted to extend the experiment in May to address staff vacancies and "improve the health and wellbeing of colleagues".

Heather Williams, leader of the Conservative opposition, said the council was "treating the residents with disdain". She told The Daily Telegraph: "They haven't consulted the residents. I think it's a complete abuse of position."

Henry Batchelor, the lead cabinet member for environmental services, said: "There will be a temporary period of a couple of weeks as residents get used to new collection days. This includes disruption for a very small number of residents. However, once bedded in, we are expecting this to be a far simpler timetable for people."

Number of young women vaping every day trebles

Eleanor Hayward
Health Correspondent

Vaping has more than tripled among young women in the past year, driving a "worrying" surge in the number of non-smokers taking it up.

The Office for National Statistics found that 6.7 per cent of women aged 16 to 24 vaped every day last year, the equivalent of 225,000 people. This is up from 1.9 per cent of young women, or 62,000, in 2021.

A further 12.2 per cent of young women said that they used vapes occasionally last year, up from 7.1 per cent in 2021.

Across the whole population, 5.2 per cent of people vape every day, the equivalent of 4.5 million in Britain. This is up from 3.9 per cent in 2021, meaning that an extra 500,000 have taken up daily vaping in the past year.

Although the NHS and government promotes vaping as a way to give up smoking, the figures show that rising numbers of non-smokers have started using e-cigarettes.

About 2.4 per cent of people who have never smoked tobacco say that they vape, up from 1.5 per cent in 2021.

Vaping use is highest in younger age groups, with 15.5 per cent of those aged 16 to 24 reporting daily or occasional use.

In the UK, it is illegal to buy vapes and e-cigarettes if you are under 18, but schoolchildren are often able to buy them online or from corner shops.

Ministers and health officials are alarmed about this rise in youth vaping, with Rishi Sunak promising further action to tighten regulations.

Deborah Arnott, chief executive of the charity Action on Smoking and Health (Ash), said that the data shows "a worrying growth in vaping among teens and young adults".

She added: "The government's response to the consultation on youth vaping due imminently must contain concrete measures to prohibit child-friendly branding, and put products out of sight and out of reach in shops, as well as much stricter regulation including a tax on the pocket-money-priced disposable vapes most popular with children."

In June, Amanda Pritchard, NHS England's chief executive, said that 40 children were admitted to hospital in England last year due to "vaping-related disorders", up from 11 two years earlier.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health has also called for an outright ban on disposable vapes.

The ONS report on smoking habits, based on a poll of 16,300 people over the age of 16, shows that smoking has fallen to a record low.

Overall 12.7 per cent of the population smoked last year, down from 13.3 per cent in 2021.

Rates have been steadily declining since the Seventies, when nearly half of all adults smoked, and Britain now has one of the lowest smoking rates in Europe.

Some 5.3 million smokers live in England, with 340,000 in Wales, 200,000 in Northern Ireland and 590,000 in Scotland.

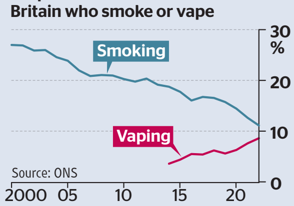
Campaigners say that radical measures are needed to achieve the government's goal for England to be "smoke-free" by 2030.

Arnott said: "The government must step up its support to smokers; for example, by reinvesting in the vital campaigns to motivate smokers to quit and discourage youth uptake which have been cut to the bone in recent years."

Banning vapes, letters, page 24

Burning issue

Proportion of over-16s in Great Britain who smoke or vape



Data for vape use shows the proportion of 'current' e-cigarette users from 2014 to 2017 and 'daily or occasional' e-cigarette users from 2018 to 2022



Laughing gas to be made illegal by end of the year

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Recreational use of laughing gas will be banned by the end of the year, Suella Braverman announced as she declared that the public was "fed up with yobs abusing drugs in public spaces".

Those caught in possession of nitrous oxide face up to two years in jail or an unlimited fine. There will be exemptions for legitimate uses, such as in the medical or catering sectors.

At present the drug is regulated under the Psychoactive Substances Act, with a ban on its supply that carries a maximum penalty of seven years in prison. This will be doubled to 14 years under changes being made by the Home Office as part of its "zero-tolerance approach to antisocial behaviour".

Nitrous oxide will be classified as a Class C substance under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The ban was promised as part of the government's antisocial behaviour plan in March, but the timing had yet to be confirmed.

Yesterday Braverman laid a parliamentary statute that must be debated and backed by both houses of parliament, although it is expected to be supported by comfortable majorities.

The home secretary said the crackdown was also designed to clean up town centres that had become littered with the small silver canisters that contain nitrous oxide.

She said: "The British people are fed up with yobs abusing drugs in public spaces and leaving behind a disgraceful mess for others to clean up. Earlier this year the prime minister and I promised a zero-tolerance approach to antisocial behaviour and that is what we are delivering. If you are caught using laughing gas as a drug, you could be hit with a hefty fine or face jail time."

Nitrous oxide slows the brain and the body's responses, with effects including feelings of euphoria. It is known as laughing gas as it often causes giggling fits. Prolonged use can cause vitamin B12 deficiency, anaemia and nerve damage. In extreme cases it has been linked to paralysis and even death.

Nitrous oxide has become the most commonly misused drug among 16 to 24-year-olds in England after cannabis. Its popularity has grown because of the relative ease with which it can be obtained and its low cost.

Chris Philp, the policing minister, said the ban would reverse the belief among some young people that there were no consequences to misusing drugs. "There is no question that abusing laughing gas is dangerous and it is paramount we take action," he said.

"Not only are we making possession an offence for the first time, we are also doubling the maximum sentence for supply to 14 years, so the dealers profiting off this trade have no place to hide."

Michael Kill, chief executive of the Night Time Industries Association, said that his members welcomed the ban, but that it must be accompanied with a broader education and harm reduction strategy. He said the intervention came at a "pivotal juncture".

However, the move to ban the drug was opposed by the independent Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, which advises the government. It warned that banning the drug could "produce significant burdens for legitimate uses".

Sewage released into rivers on dry days

Clean it up
WATER CAMPAIGN

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

Labour has called for an immediate investigation into apparent illegal dry sewage spills by three water companies.

Southern, Thames and Wessex Water together discharged sewage for more than 3,500 hours last year when it was not raining, according to the BBC. This is not allowed under their permits.

The companies released data on the start and stop times of sewage spills from storm overflows, which BBC journalists cross-referenced with rainfall data. England's other private wastewater firms refused to release figures, citing a criminal investigation by the Environment Agency.

Companies are allowed to release sewage from storm overflows, designed as the sewer network's relief valves, at times of heavy rainfall when the capacity of treatment works is overwhelmed. Swimmers, paddleboarders and other river users typically know to avoid using rivers or take extra care after downpours.

However, the new analysis suggests that last year Wessex Water released 215 spills, Thames Water 110 and Southern Water 63. The apparent spills occurred at a variety of sites, including the River Chew in Somerset, the River Lavant near Chichester and a river in a park in Dagenham, east London.

"There must be an immediate investigation into both the breach of the licence and the environmental damage caused," said Steve Reed, the shadow environment secretary. Southern and Thames did not dispute the spills although Wessex said it had doubts about the accuracy of its own data.

The investigation is not the first evidence of dry spills but is the first analysis of its extent last year. The water industry had proudly boasted that the total number of spills last year had fallen by almost a fifth in 2022, although there were still more than 300,000 reported by the Environment Agency.

The charity Surfers Against Sewage has used public data to calculate that between October 2021 and September 2022 there were 143 dry spills. However, the BBC analysis suggests the true picture is much bigger, especially given that most of the wastewater companies did not disclose their figures.

Tessa Wardley, of the Rivers Trust, said: "It's depressing if not surprising to hear dry spills are occurring so often. Discharging untreated sewage in dry weather is bad for both human health and river health — lower river flows mean more concentrated pollutants."

The trust described the sewage discharges as the "canary in the coalmine" that pointed to wider problems in the water industry, including groundwater seeping into broken pipes and blockages in the sewer network. The trade body Water UK said the spills should be investigated.

Separately, lawyers and air quality experts have written to the environment secretary, Thérèse Coffey, asking her to ensure air pollution rules are not ditched later this year following the Retained EU Law Bill (REUL), which seeks to revoke certain EU laws.

The Times is demanding faster action to improve the country's waterways and reduce pollution with its Clean It Up campaign.

ANDREW MCCAREN, STEPHEN CHUNG/LNP; STEPHEN LOCK/I-IMAGES;





Dippers in Whitby caught some early rays — and enjoyed a more peaceful swim than the crowds in Brighton. Below: A girl in west London framed by the sunset



Atlantic storms help UK look on sunny side

Swimmers faced queueing for over an hour at pools yesterday as people across Britain took advantage of a late summer heatwave (Laurence Sleator writes).

Parliament Hill Lido on Hampstead Heath in London shut its doors an hour early because it had reached capacity.

As temperatures hit 30C in some places, many also flocked to beaches such as Bournemouth and Brighton. The demand is likely to continue as forecasters predict the hottest day of the year today. Temperatures are expected to be as high as 32C.

Tourism boards in Cornwall also said they were expecting many visitors "despite the return to school and work".

Clare Nasir, a forecaster from the Met Office, predicted the southeast and east of England could be the hottest. She said it would feel "very humid" with heatwave conditions expected for a prolonged period. Nasir added that tropical storms in the Atlantic and areas of low pressure had helped to amplify the jet stream and led to high pressure "dominating the UK".

The hottest recorded September day was in 1906 when Hesley Hall in South Yorkshire reached 35.6C.

Weather forecast, page 55

Gas boiler prices could rise by £300

Martina Lees and Adam Vaughan

The UK's biggest boiler manufacturer has said that it will increase the price of gas boilers by as much as £300 because of a government scheme to boost heat pump installations.

The government is taking steps to move homes from heating systems based on fossil fuels to heat pumps and other technologies to meet the country's net-zero goal.

A proposed "Clean Heat Market Mechanism" will require boiler makers to ensure that heat pumps make up 4 per cent of their sales in the 2024-25 financial year, or buy "credits" from other manufacturers to meet the target.

The quota, which will rise each year, will be enforced by a £5,000 fine for each missed credit.

Carl Arntzen, the chief executive of Worcester Bosch, said that the fines will push up boiler prices. "The price of a boiler currently within the supply chain is anything from about £700 to £1,000. In some cases, for the top end of our models, we're having to look at about a £300 price increase."

He likened the policy to a "boiler tax" and said that he believed the mechanism was designed to increase the price of gas boilers to be comparable with that of heat pumps.

Arntzen said that the fines could result in the loss of nearly 8,000 UK manufacturing jobs.

About 86 per cent of households rely on a gas boiler. Homes are responsible for nearly a fifth of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions.

In a letter to boiler installers, Worcester Bosch said that the UK market for heat pumps was not yet at "sufficient scale". The company said this meant it was "inevitable" the firm would face fines, and would have to pass on the cost to its customers.

The company argued that the move was "not a commercial decision" but was due to a change in the law.

However, Richard Lowes of the Regulatory Assistance Project, an environmental think tank, said: "Threatening price hikes instead of embracing cleaner new technologies is a 'head in the sand' approach."

Officials at the department for energy security and net zero are disappointed at how few households have taken up £5,000 grants for air source heat pumps.

A spokesman said: "No manufacturer will need to face penalties or increase the price of a gas boiler. The scheme aims to set targets that are achievable."

Bird study sheds light on pollution and early rising

Tom Whipple Science Editor

The early bird, it seems, probably slept beneath a lamppost. A study has found that birds exposed to light pollution start the day sooner.

The research into *Parus major* (great tit), conducted in urban Glasgow and forests outside, concentrated on mothers that were incubating their eggs.

It has been shown before that urban birds seem to be earlier risers. But teasing out the precise causes is difficult — their brisker start to the day could be explained by noise or availability of food. The study, published in the journal Biology Letters, looked at the sleeping habits of forest birds whose nestboxes had been installed with a small LED light and those without. In this way, everything else was the same, except for the lighting.

The researchers found the birds in the illuminated nestboxes got up earlier, with their wake-up time matching birds in central Glasgow.

This finding strongly suggested that it was the light pollution that caused urban birds to wake up earlier. While worried that this could have an adverse effect on the chicks and their mothers, scientists from the University of Glasgow said there was so far no evidence but that more study was needed.

"Individual fitness consequences… are largely understudied and need to be addressed as, globally, natural darkness is under threat," they said.

NO LIMITS PHOTOGRAPHY



Delicate balance Ultra runner Jon Shield watches his step during the Montane Dragon's Back Race. The 380km dash began at Conwy Castle, north Wales, on Monday

Minister for men needed, Sunak told

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Rishi Sunak should appoint a dedicated minister for men to champion issues such as reducing male suicide, improving paternity rights and tackling misogyny, a red wall Tory MP has suggested.

Nick Fletcher, who in 2019 became the first Conservative to win the Don Valley seat, said the government should act to mirror the minister for women.

He highlighted statistics showing that 75 per cent of people who take their own lives are men, life expectancy is 3.7 years lower for men than women, and that 83 per cent of rough sleepers are male, as are 96 per cent of prisoners.

"We need to do something about it," he told BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*. "We are failing our young boys, we are failing our young men, we are failing society and we're failing women and girls too."

Fletcher said that while there was a women's health strategy and a hospital for women, there was nothing comparable for men even though 88 die of heart disease every day.

He said another issue that needed to be addressed was that only one in seven primary school teachers were male and one in three primary schools had no male teachers. "If you've got a young boy at home whose father's not around, and then at school there's no male teachers, it's difficult for him to find his way."

Rising cancer rates among young blamed on red meat and alcohol

Kat Lay Health Editor

Diets high in red meat, salt and alcohol have driven a "global surge" in cancer among young people since the Nineties, a study suggests.

Unhealthy habits including not eating enough fruit and vegetables and smoking are key risk factors for the most common early-onset cancers. Encouraging a better lifestyle, including greater activity levels, could reduce levels of the disease among under-50s, researchers concluded.

Worldwide, new cases of cancer in under-50s rose 79 per cent between 1990 and 2019 to 3.26 million. In the UK, cases rose by 16 per cent to 42,000.

While cancer remains overwhelmingly a disease of old age, a number of studies have raised concerns about an increase among younger people.

The study, published in the journal BMJ Oncology, is the first to draw a global picture of the disease among the young. It used data covering 29 cancers in 204 countries and regions.

Breast cancer was the type with the highest number of cases in under-50s in 2019. The fastest increases since the Nineties, however, were in cancers of the windpipe and prostate. The cancers accounting for the most deaths and disabilities in under-50s were breast, windpipe, lung, bowel and stomach.

The data was analysed by an international team of researchers from institutions including Zhejiang University in China, the University of Edinburgh and Harvard University.

They said that while genetics probably played a role, the main risk factors in under-50s related to diet. Physical inactivity, excess weight and high blood sugar were also "contributory factors".

Behind the story

This is not the first study to report a rise in young adult cancer cases, but it is the most comprehensive. Most have looked only at one country, or only one cancer (Kat Lay writes).

The new research takes a global perspective and concludes cases are increasing. Some of this can be accounted for by rising population numbers, but this still means higher demand for health services.

The proposed solutions are not necessarily expensive. Many of the cancers at particularly high levels in young people are linked to unhealthy habits.

Making changes such as giving up smoking, limiting alcohol and having a healthy diet high in vegetables and low in red meat are all likely to reduce risk, along with boosting physical activity.

The researchers suggest exploring whether screening programmes should be expanded to include people in their 40s. In the UK, breast screening begins at age 50 and lung checks for current and former smokers at 55. Men over 50 can request prostate checks from their GP.

However, although cancers in the young are increasing, they remain relatively rare.

Many experts suggest that rather than extending screening, we need to get better at finding the people at highest risk — for example, because of their genes — and keeping a close eye on them.

In a linked editorial, scientists from Queen's University Belfast said the findings "challenge perceptions of the type of cancer diagnosed in younger age groups" and should prompt education of both public and healthcare professionals "to allow earlier diagnosis, which in turn improves outcomes".

They said that while full understanding of the reasons behind the trend remained elusive, it was likely that lifestyle factors were contributing "and novel areas of research such as antibiotic usage, the gut microbiome, outdoor air pollution and early life exposures are being explored".

The highest rates of early onset cancers in 2019 were in North America, Australasia and western Europe.

The researchers said that based on observed trends for the past three decades, they estimated the global number of new early-onset cancer cases and associated deaths would rise by a further 31 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively by 2030, with those in their forties the most at risk.

Statistics experts cautioned that looking simply at increasing cancer diagnosis numbers failed to take into account population changes over the same time period.

Dr Claire Knight, senior health information manager at Cancer Research UK, said: "It's not fully clear what is driving the rise in early-onset cancers, but exposure to risk factors in earlier life, better detection of cancer and genetics might all play a part.

"However alarming this might seem, cancer is primarily a disease of older age, with the majority of new cancer cases worldwide being diagnosed in those aged 50 and above.

"We need more research to examine the causes of early onset cancer for specific cancer types. If people are concerned about their cancer risk, there are lots of ways to help reduce this, such as not smoking, maintaining a balanced diet, getting plenty of exercise and staying safe in the sun."

Professor Stephen Duffy, of the Centre for Prevention, Detection and Diagnosis at Queen Mary University of London, said the results were interesting. He highlighted decreases in levels of liver cancer, frequently caused by hepatitis B "for which there is effective vaccination" and rising cases of cancer in the windpipe, often caused by the Epstein-Barr virus "for which we do not have effective vaccination".

He added: "The finding of an increasing trend of breast cancer incidence in women under 50 is consistent with what is happening to rates in the UK.

"Since we do not routinely screen women under 50, this is not due to increased diagnostic activity. It also suggests that similar increases over time in women over 50 who are offered screening are not due to screening alone.

"Overall, there are many interesting results here, but they are complicated, and the cancer prevention and control community will need to take a long look at them over the next few weeks to consider exactly what they mean."

Weight-loss jab selling for £300 a month

Eleanor Hayward
Health Correspondent

NHS patients will miss out on weight-loss jabs because supplies are going to online pharmacies selling a month's supply for up to £300, doctors warned.

The "miracle" anti-obesity drug Wegovy, manufactured by the Danish firm Novo Nordisk, is being made available in the UK this week.

However, global shortages mean that only a fraction of the 50,000 NHS patients eligible are likely to benefit from the initial launch, but those who can afford to pay may get easier access. Novo Nordisk will not disclose how many doses have arrived in the UK but several private clinics confirmed they had supplies.

Richard Holt, professor of diabetes and endocrinology at the University of Southampton, said: "Using private providers will almost certainly mean that some of those who need the drug most will not be able obtain it."

Wegovy is the first of a new generation of anti-obesity jabs to be available on the NHS. It will be prescribed to patients who are obese and have at least one weight-related condition.

However, there is capacity for only 35,000 NHS patients to receive it. This is driving demand online, with thousands joining waiting lists for pharmacies that are receiving stocks to sell. These include Superdrug, which said more than 20,000 people had registered interest and that a month's supply would cost up to £295. Simple Online Pharmacy said more than 50,000 people had registered an interest, with the drug costing up to £299 a month.

Wonder drugs can't solve our obesity problem, Alice Thomson, page 23

TMS

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Hip to the hypocrisy

Rory Stewart never got to grips with the hypocrisy needed to thrive in politics. The former MP told a Fane event at the Barbican that he came to despise himself when he sent "creepy little texts" to David Cameron congratulating him on a speech. Stewart's feeble toadying was finally rewarded by Theresa May and, appointed to the Foreign Office, he felt his experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as speaking three Asian languages, might be put to good use. Boris Johnson had other ideas. "A Balliol man in Africa!" the foreign secretary declared. Stewart replied that he didn't know anything about Africa. "Come now, Rory," Johnson replied. "What is the capital of Uganda?" Stewart admitted ignorance. "It's Kampala," Johnson said. "Oh well, you can do it anyway."

George V was not a well-read man. His biographer, Jane Ridley, told the Oldie Literary Lunch that the King was once asked to send Thomas Hardy a telegram on his 70th birthday. "George complied but wondered why he was congratulating the man in Alnwick who made his fishing rods," Ridley said.



A SHORE THING
When an Aldeburgh resident bought four pieces of ironwork by Sir Antony Gormley and installed them on the beach in 2020 they were likened by some to giant turds. Appropriate, perhaps, given water pollution on the watch of the local MP, the environment secretary Thérèse Coffey. Now Gormley has put his money where his muck is and donated £8,000 to the Green Party in Coffey's Suffolk Coastal seat. He is not the only artist to back the Greens, who won the most district council seats in May. Maggi Hambling, whose giant seashell at Aldeburgh is a memorial to Benjamin Britten, has given £6,000. These sculptors do like to chip in.

ON THE MARK
Having worked his way up from trainee to chairman of Marks & Spencer, Lord Rose of Monewden knows the value of every employee doing their bit. In a discussion on shoplifting on Nick Ferrari's LBC show, Rose said he once pursued a thief down Oxford Street. "I chased him into Selfridges. I shouted 'Stop that man!' and a butcher picked up a ham and knocked him flat." Bet he felt a bit of a swine.

After recent items on exploiting expenses, Michael Cole, former BBC royal correspondent, emailed to say that he had a cameraman who would take an extra suitcase on assignments containing his wife's dresses, which he would get dry cleaned at the hotel. "The BBC put up with this," Michael said, "but drew the line when he also tried to get his curtains dry cleaned on the licence-payer."

PITCH PERFECT
Thangam Debbonaire, the new shadow culture secretary, has an arts pedigree. A trained cellist, she plays in a parliamentary string quartet called Statutory Instruments. She was inspired by seeing Dame Shirley Bassey, above, belting out a hit in Central Lobby on a visit to parliament. "I felt envious because it is a fantastic space," Debbonaire says. Sadly, *Big Spender* is banned from shadow cabinet meetings under Rachel "Iron Chancellor" Reeves.

PATRICK KIDD

Beware of burglars with gang of gnomes

Laurence Sleator

Burglars have started using the humble garden gnome as a ploy to help them to locate potential new targets.

Officers from the North Wales police, covering South Flintshire, have advised residents to be wary of "Christmas gnomes" appearing in their front garden and told them to be vigilant.

They said that the gnomes were being used as a "calling card" by criminals who monitor how long it takes for them to be removed by the resident.

Police said that if the gnome remained in the garden for an extended period, burglars were alerted to the fact that the homes could be empty.

Writing on Facebook, police posted: "We are aware of a report of individuals in the Broughton area leaving Christmas gnomes in residential front gardens.

"We would advise residents to be vigilant and ensure their home is secure."

The warning followed a previous community alert to residents which reported two males walking around Somerford Road in Broughton last Friday.

According to the statement, the males were "behaving in a suspicious manner, looking at properties and throwing/placing items into resident's front gardens, one such item being a small soft toy gnome".

The men, one of whom had a Birmingham accent, were carrying red "Royal Mail style shoulder bags".

News of the criminal tactic has baffled Glynis Leader, who runs Pixieland gift shop in Devon, which produces handmade gnomes.

"Normally, whenever I hear stories about gnomes, it's a man taking it and it going around the world," she told The Times. "I've never heard of them being used as a tool, but I shall now be trying to find out more."

It is not the first time that gnomes have been used by criminals. In 2017 police from Hawke's Bay in New Zealand said that about 300 were stolen by an organisation to sell on and fund drug trading. "They are taking these items to hock off for methamphetamine," Sergeant Cam Donnison said at the time.

Following the success of the 2001 film *Amélie*, there were many reports of garden gnomes being stolen and photographed next to famous landmarks around the world, recreating a prank by the main character.



Criminals are using garden gnomes to spy on potentially empty properties



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News

Blue plaque scheme poised to be introduced nationwide

Kaya Burgess

The blue plaques that commemorate the famous former occupants of London's buildings are set to be introduced across England under government proposals to be put in front of the House of Lords today.

Since it was established in 1866 by the Society of Arts, the scheme has led to almost 1,000 blue roundels being fixed to the exterior of buildings in the capital where luminaries from science, the arts, philanthropy and politics once lived or worked. To be eligible, an individual must have been dead for 20 years or passed the centenary of their birth and must not be a fictional character.

From Charles Dickens to Agatha Christie, Benjamin Franklin to Nancy Astor, the plaques can be found on homes and buildings across London in a scheme that was taken over by the London county council in 1901, the Greater London council in 1965, and has been run by English Heritage since 1986. The first plaque, to Lord Byron, was put up in 1867, but his house was demolished in 1889, making the plaque to Napoleon III in Westminster, put up later in 1867, the oldest still surviving.



The oldest plaque, to Napoleon III, went up in Westminster in 1867

Barring a brief trial period between 2000 and 2005, when 34 blue plaques were installed outside of London, the scheme has remained limited to buildings in the capital after English Heritage deemed that "much of the ground had already been covered" by similar schemes in other parts of the country. The body has said this week, however, that it backed a new attempt to roll the scheme out beyond London. Other cities and institutions have their own commemorative programmes, including the Red Wheel run by the Transport Trust, which places circular red plaques at sites where key developments in Britain's transport history took place.

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay has now tabled an amendment in the House of Lords to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to amend the law granting permission for blue plaques to be introduced beyond London. He told The Times: "We think it is a prestigious world-renowned scheme, but it should be open to communities across the whole country, not just the capital."

Duncan Wilson, chief executive of Historic England, said: "In developing a national blue plaques scheme … we want to help people feel a stronger connection to the history all around us and shine a light on the people and places of the past which have made us who we are."

London dominates architecture prize

Five of six contenders battling it out for the Riba Stirling award are in the capital, writes **Shayma Bakht**

A nursing home, social housing and a university arts block have been shortlisted for the Royal Institute of British Architects award, as the capital dominates the running for Britain's best new building.

The institute announced yesterday that five of the six buildings selected as finalists for the 2023 Riba Stirling Prize are in London.

The award, which has been running since 1996 and will be announced next month, will be given to one of the 131 winners of Riba's 2023 regional awards.

Warwick University's new faculty of arts in Coventry is the only shortlisted building outside the capital. It was selected for its unusual shape, created by four interconnected pavilion buildings, designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios to mirror the surrounding trees and parkland backdrop of the campus.

In May the building won Riba's West Midlands Award and judges praised the "natural ventilation system and the terracotta cladding that references the earthy tones of the local geology".

Murray Kerr, director of the architecture practice Denizen Works, based in London and Glasgow, said the shortlist reflected a need to provide greater funding for regional firms to help to attract better designers.

"I think the reality is that London still attracts the best talent and therefore the best clients and that is where great projects come from," he said. "I'm hoping that the diaspora caused by Covid will level the playing field a little. But we need clients with vision and strength — allied with good funding — across the country to ensure there is a more even split of shortlisted projects."

A project commissioned by Camden council in north London — Central Somers Town Community Facilities and Housing, near St Pancras station — was shortlisted for its children's facility, which has curved walls and arched windows. It also includes social housing and a playground. Adam Khan Architects, which designed the building, was said to have "lifted a deprived area" as part of wider regeneration.

Also in contention is an apartment complex in Barking, east London, with a street-facing exhibition space that runs free programmes for the community hosted in rotation by resident artists. It was hailed as "a model for affordable city living" by the judges. Its central courtyard features an installation designed as a tribute to wartime workers and service personnel.

John Morden Centre, a nursing home in Blackheath, southeast London, was praised for its light-filled timber and brick spaces, described as "vital to conquer loneliness and isolation".

Lavender Hill Courtyard Housing in Clapham, south London, by Sergison Bates architects; and Courtauld Connects gallery by The Courtauld Institute of Art in Westminster were also shortlisted.

Muyiwa Oki, Riba's president, said: "The 2023 Stirling Prize shortlist illustrates why architecture matters to all of us. These six remarkable buildings offer thoughtful, creative responses to the really complex challenges we're facing today. Whether it's tackling loneliness, building communities or preserving our heritage, these projects lay out bold blueprints for purposeful architecture."



RIBA

Central Somers Town Community Facilities; John Morden Centre, right; and Warwick University's arts faculty, top right, the only shortlisted building not in London

Where are the flashes of brilliance?

Jonathan Morrison
Comment

The Stirling Prize has often been accused of being London-centric, a charge that the Royal Institute of British Architects — based in Portland Place — has also faced.

So far nine of the 26 winners since the Stirling's creation in 1996 have been from the capital (with only three coming from other countries) and since 2013 four of the nine winners have been from London (there was no award in 2020).

The excuse has always been that good architecture costs money, and much of the money is still to be found in the capital: the £1bn Bloomberg Headquarters by Foster + Partners, which won in 2018, was unlikely to be built anywhere else.

But the puzzling thing is that the current shortlist has selected small to medium-sized projects — undoubtedly ones that tick boxes like "community" and "sustainability" — of a kind that could be found almost anywhere.

Some outside London are probably more worthy, such as the Manchester Jewish Museum by Citizens Design Bureau, with its arresting filigree of corten steel, or the simple and sympathetic Cuddymoss, in north Ayrshire, by Ann Nisbet Studio.

The biggest problem, though, is how uninspiring the shortlist is: there's little to quicken the pulse, fewer flashes of brilliance, nothing to grab the imagination (especially that of a teenager considering architecture as a profession). Pale concrete and wood dominate, as they have done for years; it's mostly modernism by numbers. It may be worthy, but it's all just a bit dull.

Gender clinic to offer teenagers trans hormone treatment soon

Joanna Crawford, Lucy Bannerman

The director of a new private clinic has said he hopes to start prescribing cross-sex hormones within the "next couple of months" to teenagers questioning their gender.

Dr Aidan Kelly is among several former staff from the Tavistock gender clinic who have set up a practice that will provide private referrals for hormone treatment and reassignment surgery.

Gender Plus will charge £275 for a one-hour appointment, which can be booked via its website without an NHS referral.

Anyone wishing to pursue hormone treatment to change gender must complete an assessment over six appointments, only one of which needs to be in person. The other five appointments may be over Zoom calls.

In an interview with Times Radio, Kelly said it would be "very unusual … but not impossible" for his team to see children under the age of eight, but insisted that the in-house hormone clinic, which he plans to open "in autumn 2023", would not prescribe hormone treatment to anyone under 16. He added that no referrals for surgery would be made until patients were aged 18 or over.

The clinic, which operates from above a chicken shop in east London, is accepting patients for consultations only but is in the process of applying to register with the Care Quality Commission so it can also start prescribing hormone treatments, "where appropriate", to people who identify as transgender.

If its application is successful, the clinic will be monitored by the watchdog, which will carry out unannounced inspections to ensure the clinic is operating within regulations.

"We have applied," Kelly said. "And we're hoping that, yes, obviously once we get that sorted out in the next couple of months, then we'll be able to start."

The Tavistock was the NHS's main gender identity service for young people, but it is being closed down after safety concerns.

An independent review prompted regulators to tighten the rules on referring children and young people down life-changing medical pathways that they might later come to regret.

Campaigners have expressed concerns that staff from a "failed service" are establishing a private clinic.

About half of the staff listed on the Gender Plus website previously worked at the Tavistock, including Kelly, a clinical psychologist, who worked there for five years. Paul Carruthers, a nurse who oversaw the prescription of hormone treatments at the Tavistock, will be leading the hormone clinic at Gender Plus.

Kelly insisted that vulnerable patients at Gender Plus would not be rushed towards transition, adding that he was trying to find the "middle ground" in a highly contested area of medicine. "I think extremes are really unhelpful — I think in any aspect of life, balance, thoughtfulness are really important and this area in particular, I think, needs that," he said.

He added: "Nobody can guarantee that a young person going down this pathway won't detransition in the future. And if they do guarantee that, I would be worried.

"These aren't things that people come to lightly. These aren't things that people wake up one day and think, 'I fancy doing that'. And I guess that's why we do things slowly.

"We try to think of things holistically and we try to understand what has brought someone to this position and try to think quite kind of pragmatically and practically with them and their support network around the different pros and cons and the dilemmas that come around each decision."

A Care Quality Commission spokesman said: "Any service wanting to carry out Regulated Activities — which are defined in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014— is required to register to do so with CQC."

ANDREW FORD/SWNS



The 12 women managed to complete a successful "head-down" formation

Records tumble for female skydivers



A group of skydivers has set a new British women's record for the largest mid-air upside-down formation (Thomas Saunders writes).

The 12 women managed to complete a successful "head-down" formation while falling at about 120mph. The complex manoeuvre was completed about 4,270m (14,000ft) in the air and required the women to fly together while holding onto each other's arms and facing downwards.

Once the skydivers had completed the jump at Skydive Langar in Nottinghamshire they then went on to set another record on the same day.

The second jump, which was also a first for British female skydivers, involved ten of the same women building a shape mid-air before letting go and reforming again nearer the ground.

The event was overseen by British Skydiving, the sport's governing body. It was judged and verified by an all-female judging team, led by Lucy Westgarth.

Westgarth said: "Not only were the records a demonstration of flying skill, but also the commitment to coaching and helping each other as women in the sport.

"The organisers worked with the judges from the beginning to ensure a successful event. It was a pleasure to confirm they succeeded in both record attempts."

The jumps were organised by Hannah Parker and Elise Sharp. It took five jumps to get the records, with practices over three days during the summer.

Parker said: "It's been an incredible experience and we're very proud to have achieved a new British record. Our hope is that our efforts will inspire other women in skydiving to get involved, and for more females generally to come and have a go."

It is not the first time that new skydiving heights have been achieved at Skydive Langar. In July a team achieved the largest sequential formation dive to take place in the UK.

The jump involved all 41 skydivers forming two consecutive shapes in the sky. Shortly afterwards they surpassed their own record by forming three consecutive formations in a single skydive.

Social worker loses Pride lanyard case

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A Christian social worker who was accused of labelling homosexuality as "evil" sued a London council after claiming that she had been forced to wear a rainbow lanyard.

Abigail Yates told an employment tribunal that she objected to using the multicoloured strap for Pride month, with her boss claiming that she said that homosexuality was "satanic".

The social worker claimed that wearing the rainbow lanyard — which she was given on her first day of work — was mandatory and that as a result she was being treated unfairly because of her faith. When she lost her job, she sued Lambeth council for discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief.

But her claim has been dismissed after the tribunal in Croydon, south London, found that wearing the rainbow lanyard was voluntary.

The tribunal was told that on her first day at the council in 2019, Yates was given the rainbow lanyard for her ID card. The council had distributed the lanyards to 2,000 staff and schools to mark Pride month and recipients were encouraged to wear them.

However, Yates, who described herself as being "strict" in her adherence to Christianity, expressed concern to her supervisor, Alice Gyamfi-Sarpong.

The supervisor told the tribunal that Yates said she "did not agree with homosexuality or gay rights because it's evil and satanic". Yates denied making the comment and said she only asked if she could buy her own lanyard.

Gyamfi-Sarpong, who also said she is Christian, told the tribunal she thought she could "educate" Yates so that she would change her view. The manager said that she had not wanted to cause trouble for Yates as they were both black single mothers.

The tribunal heard that Yates wore a plain lanyard that she had purchased herself. The social worker told the hearing that she was then told not to speak to her colleagues and that she was barred from team meetings.

But in its report, the tribunal found that Yates was told to stop distracting colleagues by talking too much but that she was not told to stop talking altogether. It also found that Yates was invited to some team meetings.

Rejecting the claim, Adam Leith, the tribunal judge, said that the "weight of the evidence" was that "wearing a rainbow lanyard was not mandatory … lots of different colours and styles of lanyards were worn within the [council]".

Send anxious children to school, urges Whitty

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Parents should send anxious children to school because keeping them at home will make it worse, Sir Chris Whitty has advised.

Pupils should also attend if they have sore throats or runny noses, according to the chief medical officer for England.

A letter published by the Department for Education acknowledged that the coronavirus pandemic had left some families feeling less confident about assessing whether their children were well enough to be in school.

Signed by leading medical professionals including Pat Cullen, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, and Professor Kamila Hawthorne, chairwoman of the Royal College of General Practitioners, the letter said children were often better off in school even if they had problems with mental or physical health.

The letter, sent to head teachers to help them advise families, said: "Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation. It is usually appropriate to send children to school with mild respiratory illnesses."

The letter, also signed by Dr Lade Smith, president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, added: "Mild or moderate anxiety can be a normal part of growing up. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending."

News

Crime caper packed with killer one-liners

Film Kevin Maher

Hit Man
Venice Film Festival
★★★★☆

At a festival that's already played host to two slightly self-important hitman movies, from David Fincher (*The Killer*) and Harmony Korine (*Aggro DrIft*), comes an effervescent comedy from Richard Linklater that simultaneously snubs its nose at the entire genre while easily nabbing the honour of most purely entertaining film to grace the Lido so far.

Featuring a revelatory performance from *Top Gun: Maverick*'s Glen Powell, it's the true-life tale of Gary Johnson, a community college teacher from Houston, Texas (the film's action is shifted to New Orleans) who sustained a supplementary career working for the city's police department as an undercover hitman.

Whenever desperate and deranged citizens, via the criminal fraternity or dark web hyperlinks, requested the services of an actual hitman they were regularly filtered through to Johnson's fake alter-ego "Ron" and a near-certain prison sentence.

Why? Because hitmen, as Johnson reminds us early on, over a dizzying clip-montage of film and TV assassins, don't exist. "It's a fantasy to think that someone's going to risk the death penalty to fix your personal problems!" he says, as the footage segues into often hilarious scenes of Johnson undercover, in multiple guises, seducing would-be clients with the kind of patter normally reserved for, well, movies and TV. There's a subtle yet biting commentary here about how deeply American (or western) life has been penetrated by its cultural fictions.

The potential for comedy in all this is huge, and heavily reliant on the disparity between Johnson's meek everyday persona and the swaggering expletive-filled machismo that informs Ron's every utterance. So assured is Ron, in fact, that he soon arouses the desires of a would be client called Madison (Adria Arjona), leading to a nascent romance, a conflict of interests and an ingenious final act where the boundaries between Ron and Johnson become inherently, delectably, and homicidally, blurred.

Linklater has been funny before (*School of Rock*, *Dazed and Confused*), but rarely this eccentric. The movie is buoyed by a go-for-broke turn from Powell, who is also the film's co-writer — talk about writing yourself a winning role.

There are immaculate one-liners throughout, delivered with such aplomb that, in the last 20 minutes, the Venice audience were consistently erupting into applause as each zinger landed. As in? Madison is baffled as to why "ruthless" hitman Ron displays such good manners. "Hey," he says, snarling, yet cool. "Chivalry may be dead, but I didn't kill it." So satisfying.

Hit Man will be released in UK cinemas in 2024


Adria Arjona and Glen Powell in Richard Linklater's hilarious, ingenious Hit Man

Stables sacked manager over pregnancy

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A manager who worked for less than two years at a stable yard has been awarded £55,000 for being sacked after announcing her pregnancy.

Hayley Bates was described as not being "a good fit" after she told her bosses that her accommodation would not be suitable once she had a child, an employment tribunal was told.

She was dismissed ten days later and has now successfully sued ASH Elite Equine, in Windsor, which bills itself as "one of the UK's leading livery yards".

The tribunal awarded Bates slightly more than £55,000 after finding that she was a victim of pregnancy discrimination and was unfairly dismissed.

During the hearing in Reading, Berkshire, the tribunal was told that Bates lived in a flat on site. In 2021, after contacting the owners about a change of accommodation due to her pregnancy, she was sacked.

Bates was told that she was dismissed as a result of "ongoing needs and requirements of the business changing".

She was also told that some clients had raised concerns about her "attitude" and "behaviour". But the tribunal said that in the absence of any formal or informal correspondence about her performance, the "only reasonable inference" was that Bates was sacked because she was pregnant.

As part of her payout, Bates was awarded £12,500 for injury to feelings.



Pass me the wellness bag, I feel a little queasy
Matthew Parris
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Comment

The Truss experiment was always doomed

There are still some who blame poor execution for a chaotic premiership but the plan was flawed from the start

Daniel Finkelstein



@DANNYTHEFINK

The premiership of Lord Goderich, which began in 1827, was a disaster. The King described his prime minister as "a damned, snivelling, blubbering blockhead", while to Benjamin Disraeli he was "a transient and embarrassed phantom". He served for 130 days before chaos caused his administration to collapse.

Yet for all this, Goderich's period in office lasted almost three times longer than that of Liz Truss and is more fondly remembered.

At least it is by most people. Today is the first anniversary of Truss's ascension to office and, as with all orthodox interpretations of history, there are some who are attempting a revision. Extraordinarily, there are to be found people — numerous enough to hold some sway among Conservatives — who argue that at a convenient moment we should attempt something similar to the Truss premiership again.

The essence of their argument is that Truss was basically right, even though it all went wrong. They acknowledge that it didn't work out, using strangled language reminiscent of the Japanese emperor after Hiroshima: "The war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage." However, they say it might have worked out in better circumstances.

They did it all too quickly, they admit, and Truss may not have been the political titan that they thought her to be. However, with a steadier hand and more patience and fewer people conspiring against them, it all would have been fine. And in any case, there is no alternative.

As I was working in Conservative Central Office on the day Tony Blair walked up Downing Street with lots of children waving flags, I have some sympathy for those in a hopeless political position, so let me start by saying where I think the revisionists are correct.

I think Truss was indeed right to argue that growth should be the focus of her attention and that this would require a bold, even occasionally combative, approach to removing barriers to growth. I did not think this an absurd way of framing her political argument nor a mistaken view of the national challenge.

What is, however, absurd is to suggest that the Truss approach only failed because of poor execution and even poorer executioners. The problems with what she was proposing were much more profound than that. Conservatives pondering her failure need to understand that the flaws in her strategy have not simply gone away with her and Kwasi Kwarteng.

> Her supporters' call for tax cuts simply ignores demographics

First, the central contention of the Truss government was that high tax rates constitute one of the biggest barriers to growth and that lowering them is central to economic success.

I do not favour high tax and I agree that, other things being equal, we need to keep our business tax rates competitive — especially now we are out of the single market. However, the evidence that it is high tax that is holding Britain back is weak.

Britain has a longstanding productivity problem linked to low investment. Its industrial policy lacks focus and it is failing to take full advantage of the opportunity to be a scientific and technological leader. Simply cutting corporation tax is not a substitute for this.

Second, and linked to this, tax cuts do not pay for themselves. The idea that they do is very attractive to people (Boris Johnson, for instance) who want to go on spending without having to pay for it. They point to the curve drawn on a napkin in the 1970s by the American economist Art Laffer, who argued that if tax rates reached 100 per cent, revenue would fall to zero because there would be no money generated.

What they never seem to notice is that Laffer's curve also shows that if tax rates are 0 per cent there would be no tax revenue either. There certainly must come a point as you raise taxes when the rise becomes self-defeating but there is little empirical evidence to show that we have gone beyond that point and that we can cut taxes painlessly.

Margaret Thatcher always resisted the Laffer curve and insisted that to cut taxes you had to control spending. She was right. So when the markets rebelled at the Truss government's unfunded tax cuts, it was they who were being Thatcherite and not Truss or her supporters.

Third, funding tax cuts by curbing spending is going to become more and more difficult to do. The Truss argument simply ignores demographics. As the former Tory minister David Willetts has long argued, the Thatcherite tax-cutting policy took advantage of the postwar baby boom. For 30 years this produced a very favourable balance of workers and dependants. Now the baby boomers are becoming pensioners.

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JACK HILL



Liz Truss was right to argue that growth should be the focus of her attention

This is going to require a steady (and large) increase in public spending on pensions, health and social care just in order to stand still. The great challenge for governments will be how to raise revenue to pay for this, so making tax cuts the core of growth policy is impractical.

Finally, there is the idea of the anti-growth coalition. Truss fancied that it might be possible to frame the election as a contest between those who support growth and those who do not. The list of people who would be pilloried for being in this latter category seemed to grow as she warmed to her theme.

Suella Braverman suggested, for instance, that people who eat tofu were part of the anti-growth coalition. I am not much of a fan of such ways of dividing people. And suggesting that the Conservative Party should bravely fight vegetarians is an electoral plan that requires a little fine-tuning.

However, even if this idea was not utterly ridiculous, it ignores the nature of the current Tory voting base. Conservative voters are generally older and better established. A policy of adaptation and change isn't necessarily very attractive to them. It isn't the "wokerati", to use Braverman's phrase, who are the most nervous about planning reform. The opposition comes primarily from property-owning Tory voters.

It is culturally conservative voters, rather than people who live in Islington and read The Guardian, who are most likely to oppose the liberalisation of immigration. Indeed an argument between Truss and her home secretary on this subject contributed to the latter's resignation.

And, of course, it is Tory voters who would be most likely to resist a policy of reducing spending on pensions in order to fund reductions in business tax. Even if this policy was successful in increasing prosperity, it would redistribute it away from retired people.

In other words, the line that divides Truss's growth and anti-growth coalitions runs straight through the Conservative Party base.

I do understand the attractions of counterintuitive columns, of course I do — but my advice to those penning articles that can be summarised as "Let's try that whole Truss thing again" is nonetheless to pause before clicking on send.

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India sees chance to edge ahead of China

As Xi's economy falters, the West may regard Narendra Modi as a better commercial partner

Roger Boyes

@ROGERBOYES



Monkey impersonators have thankfully scared scavenging rhesus macaques away from the New Delhi venue for the G20 summit. The business of global governance can proceed this weekend without a screeching accompaniment. But Xi Jinping won't be there, frightened it seems not of marauding monkeys but of losing face. That's the same Chinese leader who has attended every G20 since 2013, the man whose mission is to rewrite the rules of global trade and governance. Why is he missing in action?

China has to deal with a cascade of poor economic indicators and is no longer an obvious and inevitable candidate to take over from the United States as top dog. The country's growth, once a very brisk annual 8 per cent, may struggle this year to reach 3 per cent. Consumer confidence has been hit rather than spurred by successive Covid lockdowns; China slid into deflation for the first time since 2021. There is a deepening property slump: Yang Huiyan, once Asia's richest woman, is seeing her billions evaporate. Youth unemployment reached a record 21 per cent; last month the authorities stopped publishing data.

The China boom could at this rate turn into a China bust, with spillover effects across the world. At home it's impossible to ignore a sense of national stagnation. There's even a word for it: *neijuan*, which translates into "life twisting inwards without real progress".

Little wonder that Xi is reluctant to turn up in India (the premier Li Qiang is going instead). At the G20 he would have had to fight for the vision of his Chinese dream, reach out to the non-aligned in the great stand-off between the US-led West and those countries dependent on Beijing's patronage. Now, it seems, he doesn't feel up to it.

In the US, meanwhile, wages are up; inflation has slowed. Heavy investment in the defence of Ukraine seems to show that Washington will stick up for its friends. Vladimir Putin's absence from this week's summit — perhaps because he has developed an understandable fear of flying — helps make the point. The continuation of the Ukraine war adds to the fuel, fertiliser and food burden of the global south, yet Xi has sworn a limitless friendship with Putin.

> Beijing is not the only candidate to take over from the US as top dog

Many in the G20 don't want to make a choice between Biden and Xi and the US president will not have a home run in New Delhi. Still, he comes with an advantage and has the added edge of being the guest of Narendra Modi, who is at loggerheads with Beijing, frustrated by Xi's serial snubs.

Modi and Xi talked recently at the Brics summit but failed to agree on anything. China later said the meeting had been at Modi's request, making the Indian prime minister seem like a supplicant. Then satellite pictures showed China was constructing an underground bunker system on the Himalayan massif, on the Indo-Chinese border. And in the run-up to G20 China published a map claiming not only Taiwan but also a chunk of India as Chinese possessions.

You can see why the Beijing leadership might be undergoing a fit of pique. India's population has recently overtaken that of China, where low birth rates are now part of its problems, an Indian lunar landing has just underlined its great power ambitions, its economy is humming and Modi seems well positioned for re-election next year. While he is still noncommittal on supporting Ukraine, he seems ready to work together on strategies to blunt and circumvent China's control of global supply chains.

India cannot be a one-for-one replacement for the still-huge Chinese economy but it can help diminish the world's overdependence on Chinese goods. And the West seems ready to help Modi stand tall if Xi's military tries to bully the country.

The supply chain workaround is happening. Big western shipping and logistics groups are rushing to invest in ports and warehouses in countries such as India and Vietnam to suck in the offshore manufacturing that would have gone to China. Biden is scheduled to go to Vietnam for a day next week precisely to encourage it to play a bigger role in the economic front against Beijing.

There is talk of the Vietnamese offering to make the US a "comprehensive strategic partner", alongside China. If that happens, Japan and Australia could follow. The US commercial secretary visiting Beijing the other day warned the Chinese leaders that they were — through intellectual property theft, counter-espionage laws, police raids and unclear privacy rules — making China "uninvestable".

The argument being made against Beijing within the G20 and other forums is backed by security promises. India is clear on what it wants from the US: a permanent presence in the Indian Ocean (it has a base in Diego Garcia but perhaps not for much longer), alert monitoring of the dozen or so Chinese vessels in the ocean, especially if it bulks up into an aircraft carrier force, and closer scrutiny of India's neighbours, such as Pakistan and Sri Lanka, who are in deep with China.

There's no reason why the US, and Britain, should not support these reasonable requests. The point is to present robust choices to members of the global south. Everyone inevitably has some degree of commercial relationship with China. The aim has to be to ensure that trading with Beijing does not become a dangerous instrument of control.

That's why Xi's absence from the G20 has to be taken seriously. He may consider that he is threatened by closer ties between Modi and the West, that the G20 is a hostile environment. The truth is that India, for all its flaws, is a more palatable and more stable partner than China.

Matthew Parris Notebook

Pass me the wellness bag, I feel a little queasy

I never thought I'd hear this. Our era's appetite, it seems, for euphemising unpleasantness out of existence has overtaken even my prim 19th-century great-grandparents' tiptoeing around words that are best not said. However, surely Victorian Britain was able to stomach the word "sick".

Not so, I found, on a little local air service in Australia, whence I've just returned. Our pilot gave us a short introduction to the aircraft before we boarded. "In the pocket in the seatback in front of you," she said, "you'll find a wellness bag." Nobody laughed.

I found myself contemplating how I'd frame it if I did feel (how shall we put it?) less than well. "I think I'm about to experience a wellness issue going forward, Miss, and I face a bit of a challenge because there's no wellness bag in the seat pocket …" Would that do, do you think? Fortunately she was a brilliant pilot, and I was never challenged.

Case for Ulez is airtight

And here's something I never thought I'd write. As things stand I shall be voting for the Labour candidate, Sadiq Khan, in next May's London mayoral contest. Until now I've thought him a rather weak holder of that office but I so admire the way he has stuck to his guns on the issue of extending Ulez, the ultra-low emission zone, to outer London. It's cheap of the Tories to weaponise this when deep down they surely know such things must come.

My east London flat is a few hundred yards from one end of the long Limehouse Link road tunnel, where I understand residents already adjacent when the tunnel was built were compensated for the filth and noise. Try walking alongside the tunnel entrance. All the walls, including those of houses, are blackened by a kind of soot. What must be the state of the inside of residents' lungs?

But it isn't just because I think the Ulez policy is right: it's also because Khan himself clearly does, and so (unlike Sir Keir Starmer) refuses on principle to retreat from something he's sure will protect people, whatever they may think.

I had the same admiration for Ken Livingstone when, as mayor, he introduced a congestion charge for inner London — to a great caterwauling of complaint that he simply shrugged off. No political party now would reverse his decision. When democrats act as though voters must always be right, democracy itself totters.



What price joy?

My heart sank when I saw the envelope. It was from LV=, which arranges our insurance. I know from bitter experience that letters to existing clients from the industry almost always inform us of an increase in premiums. I opened the envelope. It was about our car insurance and from the retail manager, Heather Smith. "A miscalculation has been made in regard to your premium." Uh-oh.

But wait! "A refund is due to you of £20. This should appear in your bank account within the next five working days." These are the days of miracle and wonder/And don't cry, baby, don't cry.

Something phishy

I suppose many readers have been perturbed, like me, to get an email apparently from a friend or relative describing an urgent need to transfer money to someone who has fallen into difficulty abroad, and asking us to help arrange it. I've just received my third such email (so far) this year. I, naïf though I am, did smell a rat. The email address (a friend and neighbour down the hill) looked authentic but on investigation wasn't.

A chap in Buxton got a far more sophisticated try-on recently, apparently from a professional associate, mentioning a game of golf in which they'd both been involved. The sum solicited was very large. The recipient believed the email but, indignant about the request, made a phone call — fortunately. It struck me, as I warned my neighbour about this, that it simply wouldn't have occurred to me to report it to the police, though there's a no-reply address you can forward fishy messages to. It was a serious attempted theft but when it comes to phishing, we're on our own.

In the 17th century a judge, directing a jury to acquit, asked whether one man should go to prison simply for making a fool of another. It was a rhetorical question. We seem to be going back to those days.

THUNDERER

Nature-depleted Britain must follow Victorian pioneers

Hilary McGrady

The social reformer Octavia Hill, co-founder of the National Trust, argued that all those living and working in urban areas should have access to open spaces. She believed in what she called "the life-enhancing virtues of pure earth, clean air and blue sky".

The nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, another prominent Victorian, insisted on the virtues of fresh air and green spaces for her convalescing patients. Recognising the importance of healthy, well-ventilated environments was radical for the time but by 1878, parliament had passed the Open Spaces Act, which mandated the creation of parks, playgrounds and public gardens. Between 1885 and 1914, more public parks were built in Britain than ever before.

We need similar reforming zeal today. Britain is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and bottom of the G7 in this regard. Four out of five of us live in urban areas and research by the National Trust shows that nearly 300 deprived neighbourhoods have no access to trees or green spaces.

With a general election coming ever closer, the National Trust is calling on all political parties to give millions more people access to the mental and physical benefits of high-quality green space.

The total social cost of obesity in the UK is estimated to be £58 billion a year. Mental health issues are the largest single cause of disability in Britain and the cost to the economy is £105 billion a year. The link between access to open spaces and the benefits to body and mind is clear and proven.

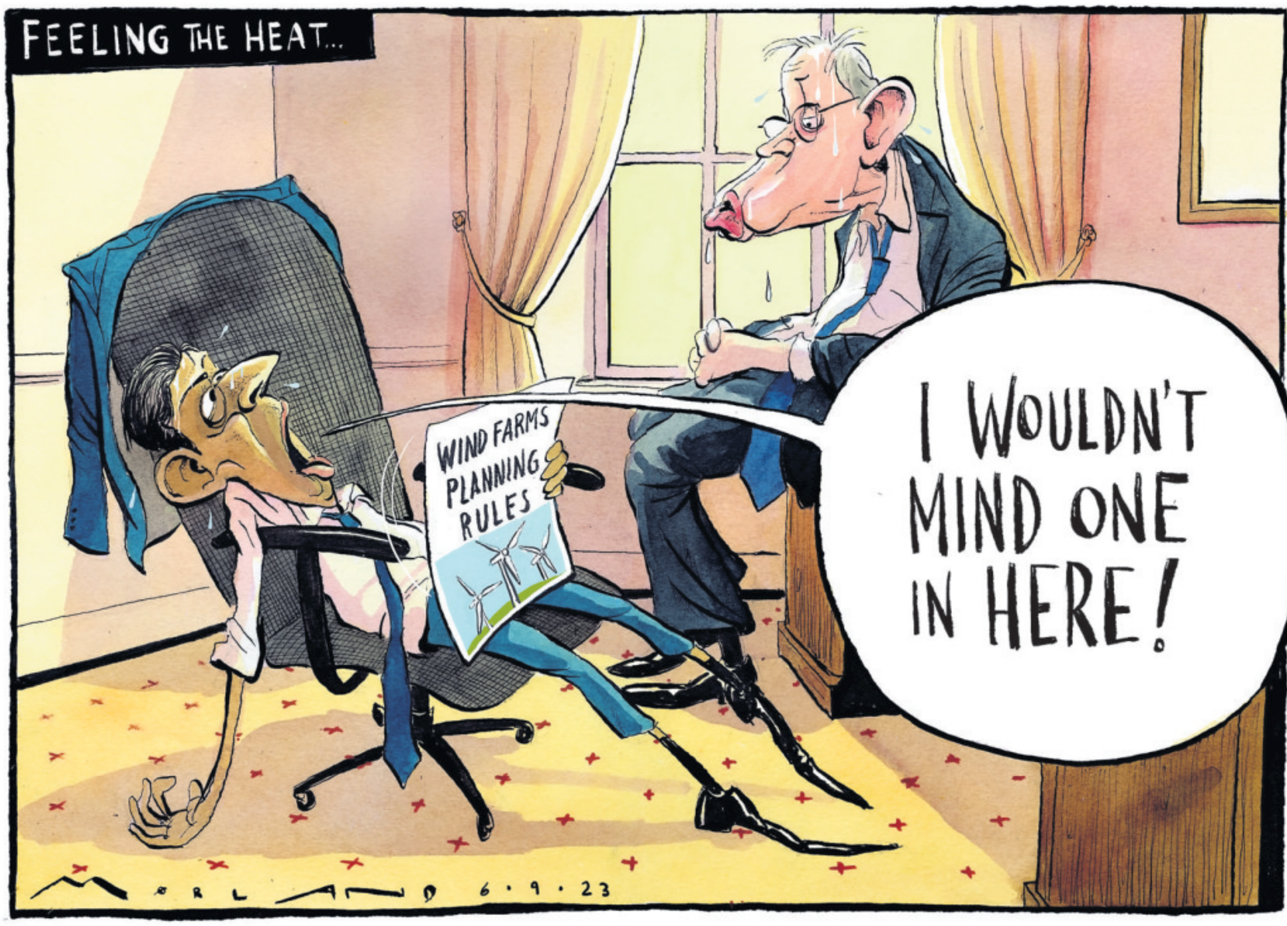
The National Trust is doing its bit, planting blossom trees in cities and transforming a Victorian viaduct in Manchester into an urban park. On the edge of Birmingham, we are working on the 8 Hills Regional Park across a 47-square-mile area.

Our research shows that a £5.5 billion investment in green space would yield £200 billion in health benefits. About 20 million people would have their lives improved — nearly a third of the UK population. Every pound spent would return further value in terms of increased biodiversity, carbon capture and better air quality.

We must return to the scale of ambition of those Victorian pioneers. The government has a stated aim to give everyone access to green space within 15 minutes of their home. We want to see them put this target on a legal footing and set out a clear and deliverable plan, including an urban infrastructure fund to deliver change.

As Hill said, everyone, wherever they live, should be able to enjoy pure earth, clean air and blue sky. It's past time to make this reality.

Hilary McGrady is director-general of the National Trust



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Wonder drugs can't solve our obesity problem

Wegovy is making its inventors rich but the real solutions to Britain's crisis lie in education and a ban on junk food ads

Alice Thomson

@ALICETTIMES

They're partying in Denmark, having discovered a miracle drug that appears to guarantee weight loss. More than 10,000 staff at Novo Nordisk held an all-day rave last week. The 100-year-old firm is suddenly close to becoming the most valuable company in Europe, worth £340 billion, because of its new slimming sensation, Wegovy, which is being sought by everyone from Elon Musk to the NHS.

At the same time food suppliers and supermarkets have been raking in the cash. Deliveroo had revenues of close to £2 billion last year from serving us convenient snacks day and night; McDonald's sales and profits continue to rise.

So there we have it. Big food companies have been fattening us up for 50 years but big pharma companies will save us. Both industries are making vast profits out of people's desire for doughnuts, burgers, fried chicken and muffins and our subsequent misery at being overweight. Meanwhile the NHS has to pick up the bill for our addiction to ultra-processed food. Obesity has been costing public healthcare billions and accounts for one in six hospital admissions. Now doctors must spend even more on drugs to help alleviate the problem. It seems insane.

The proponents of Wegovy say this really is a wonder cure that will help deal with obesity and its related diseases by suppressing people's appetites. The drug, semaglutide, mimics a venom found in the mouth of a Gila monster lizard, which needs to eat only four times a year. It regulates blood sugar levels, which is why it was first used for type 2 diabetes, alongside its sister drug,

> Big food firms have been fattening us up, big pharma will save us

Ozempic. It is also thought to help with high blood pressure and heart disease.

However, the NHS has announced that it will only provide a weekly injection of Wegovy to 50,000 people for two years as part of a weight management plan. What then? Even if they eventually extend this to more overweight people, will these patients inflate and deflate for the rest of their lives as they go on and off the drug? Or will they end up having to take an injection of semaglutide once a week for life?

Online pharmacies such as Boots have said they will sell Wegovy for about £200 a month but that's £2,400 a year. Only the richest can afford the cost of going private indefinitely. Most of the 26 per cent of people in this country who are clinically termed as obese, including a fifth of 11-year-olds, could be playing a game of snakes and ladders, up one year, down the next, as they binge and abstain.

Even those who can afford Wegovy long-term may find that it doesn't work for them. One friend who took it discovered the nausea, dizziness and lethargy she endured were so debilitating that she had to stop, and piled on even more weight. Another lost three stone but also his sense of taste and smell. The saddest side effect of Wegovy is that it can put you off food, rather than teaching you to celebrate each mouthful.

Every generation has a wonder drug to deal with the nation's ills. In the UK in the 1980s, Prozac was seen as the panacea for depression: take the little white pill and all will be fine, yet mental health problems have spiralled. It's always preferable to treat the causes rather than the symptoms.

Everyone knows that if you exercise more and eat less, you'll be fitter. This sounds easy but it's impossible for many to summon the willpower to eat healthily in the 21st century. Showing daily self-restraint is exhausting, particularly for children if they are constantly bombarded with advertisements for sugary cereals, unhealthy food at school, cheap chocolate and crisps, and aren't playing enough sport while glued to their screens.

Adults in this country face similar

> The prime minister, with his Peloton and pool, doesn't understand

difficulties. Amazon deliveries, working from home, affordable cars and household gadgets are convenient but mean most of us don't move as much as older generations once did. Meanwhile, frazzled parents with little money and time can at least "reward' their families with pizza and ice cream. Everywhere we go now, there is an abundant array of food: at service stations, on trains, in coffee shops.

No one should be fat-shamed for being supersized; we're all fighting an industry intent on turning you into an addict, convincing you to eat artificial, highly processed, cheap, easy foods. These salty, sugary concoctions often imitate the carbs-to-fat ratio in breast milk and have hyper-palatability but leave us craving more.

The prime minister, with his Peloton bike and indoor swimming pool, doesn't appear to understand. Maybe he has looked at his predecessors who have tried and failed with 689 anti-obesity measures since 1992. However, the 2018 sugar tax on fizzy drinks has been a success, with companies reformulating their brands, and should be extended to ultra-processed food. There should also be a ban on junk food advertising before 9pm and schools should be encouraged to reintroduce sport alongside maths as a compulsory part of the day.

The Danish aren't stockpiling Wegovy for themselves. They have one of the lowest rates of obesity in Europe, having introduced a tax on unhealthy products and encouraged the nation to eat a low-fat Nordic diet and get on their bikes.

In Vietnam they are also obsessed with food but theirs is almost all home-prepared from dozens of local ingredients, often grown on people's balconies and in their backyards, and enjoyed with the family. They don't crave sugar and salt, but herbs, rice, fish and vegetables, and they love cooking. Maybe that's why they have the lowest obesity rates in the world.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@thetimes.co.uk or by post to 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF

THE TIMES ONE NEWSPAPER PENNY

Faith in democracy

Sir, In response to Melanie Phillips's article (Sep 5), I have not lost faith in democracy per se, I have lost faith in *our* democracy. While democracy has several worrying weaknesses, the increasing power of the PM, tactical voting and safe seats being obvious examples, that we still accept amateurs as MPs is the most alarming flaw. In too many cases MPs start their political careers at school, continue them at university and work for an established politician before becoming an MP themselves. Ministers expect to go to the front of any NHS queue and send their children to private schools. They are isolated from our reality. In any other profession there would be training courses and standards of competence, yet we allow ourselves to be governed by individuals whose sole qualification is gross overconfidence. We now have a generation of citizens forced to expect lengthy waiting times in the NHS, crumbling schools, potholed roads and a broken economy. The list goes on — unless you belong to the privileged class that buys its way out of this mess. That is not democracy, it's "I'm all right Jack".
David Diprose
Thame, Oxon

Sir, Could a job description and contract for MPs, which would enable parliament to ensure that all MPs and ministers complied with the Nolan principles, provide a partial solution?
Tom Brake
Director, Unlock Democracy

Banning vapes

Sir, Hugo Rifkind (Sep 5) makes a nuanced case for regulating vapes. I have two objections to vaping: first, the manufacturers use introductory offers to try to lure impressionable teenagers into addiction; second, vaping breaches JS Mills's "harm principle" — the sickly-sweet cloud of mist is blown all over non-vaping pedestrians going about their business.
John O'Brien
Richmond, Surrey

Decline of reading

Sir, Authors who blame the shrinking number of public and school libraries for the decline in children's interest in books (report, Sep 5) overlook children's obsessional use of mobile phones. Screen time has proved to be far more interesting for children than books, and more accessible.
Colin Pordham
Norwich

Corrections and clarifications

ipso. Regulated

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'Sticking plaster approach' to school cracks

Sir, Gareth Davies hit the nail on the head by highlighting the critical importance of maintaining public buildings and replacing old IT systems ("It's not just concrete, the government's IT is cracking up too", Sep 5) This is particularly true for the NHS. While plans to eradicate Raac from the NHS are finally under way, many more buildings need modernising or repairing and NHS trust leaders — and indeed anyone who has worked in the health service — will be exasperated by the patchy state of NHS IT systems.

Investment in digital technologies across the NHS will transform patient care and improve access to services and yet investment in core digital and IT infrastructure is often overlooked in favour of other headline-grabbing initiatives. History has shown us that quick fixes rarely turn out well.
Sir Julian Hartley
Chief executive, NHS Providers

Sir, The answer to Ian Nelson's question (letter, Sep 5) asking what the Labour government did while in office from 1997 to 2010 is simple: the Labour government set up a £55 billion schools rebuilding project intended to replace all Raac schools. If this project had been pursued, much of the present problem would by now have been avoided. Michael Gove was appointed education secretary in 2010 and immediately scrapped this rebuilding programme. If one looks for fault one should look no further than Michael Gove and the Conservative Party.
David R Burton
Kenilworth, Warks

Sir, Gay Lee (letter, Sep 5) notes "with relief" that Jeremy Hunt has said that he will "spend what it takes" to fix the problem of crumbling schools. My heart sank. At the moment the government does not even know the scale of the problem (some councils still have not replied to the government's questionnaire), never mind the remedial action required or the cost. I do wish that politicians would find out the cost of policies before announcing them.
Richard Tweed FCA
Croydon

Sir, Keith White's point about Roman concrete and the construction of the Pantheon is well made (letter, Sep 4). In 2017 mineralogists from the University of Utah determined that the Romans made concrete by mixing volcanic ash with quicklime, seawater, and volcanic rock, which gave it self-healing properties (and resilience in maritime environments). More recently, in January scientists from MIT, DMAT Italy, Harvard, and IMM Switzerland published a research paper showing that Roman concrete could self-heal cracks up to 0.6mm across, better than most modern equivalents.
Dr Anthony Harris
Research fellow, Clare Hall, Cambridge

Sir, During the Second World War, my school, the Skinners' Company's School for Girls in Stamford Hill, north London, was evacuated to Welwyn Garden City, where we shared The New Secondary School. The latter had the whole of the school's premises in the morning while we went round different church halls having geography and history lessons, among others. We had the school in the afternoon, where we had science and gym lessons. It all worked very well. The walking from hall to hall was very good for us, and no doubt is why I am still here at the age of 94.
Sylvia Thorne
Wrotham, Kent

Second opinion

Sir, In the aftermath of the tragic death of Martha Mills, her mother's plea for a "Martha's rule" should receive widespread support from politicians and the medical profession ("Mother calls for right to second opinion after teenager's death", Sep 5). It is sad that some doctors appear to need protocols to listen to a mother's basic instincts. Merope Mills, in the midst of her grief, has the generosity to acknowledge that most doctors are compassionate and kind. However, a minority of doctors are arrogant and these "bad apples" undermine trust in the profession. Such doctors with their self-assertive confidence lack insight, curiosity and empathy. It is not surprising that patients, relatives and colleagues find it hard to challenge these individuals.

In addition to implementing "Martha's rule", the recruitment, training and regulation of doctors needs to reflect that arrogance is unacceptable in medical practice.
Dr David Jeffrey
Senior lecturer in ethics and law, Three Counties Medical School, University of Worcester

Britannia revisited

Sir, Further to your report "Proms cellist: I'd prefer folk tunes to Rule, Britannia!" (Sep 5), *Rule, Britannia!* was written in 1740 and was used in Thomas Arne's masque about King Alfred, with a script co-written by Thomas Mallet. Should *Rule, Britannia!* one day be considered inappropriate, Mallet also wrote a song, *Married to a Mermaid* (1755), which has an adapted version of the chorus: "Singing Rule Britannia,/ Britannia rules the waves/ Britons never, never, never shall be/ Married to a mermaid/ At the bottom of the deep blue sea."

This version about a young man who falls overboard and marries a mermaid with the ship's captain's consent would perhaps reflect the present status of Britain's international reputation for soft power.
Michael Codner
Senior associate fellow for military history, Royal United Services Institute

Letters to The Times must be exclusive and may be edited. Please include a full address and daytime telephone number.

Rootless alumni

Sir, Robert Crampton (Times2, Sep 5) asks how can former pupils of state schools build "alumni loyalty, support and connections of their own" to rival those of public school alumni when their state school "does not physically exist any more". The problem runs deeper. The sixth-form college where I worked went through three changes of identity due to a mixture of merger and rebranding. The buildings are still there, and in use, but the institutions they housed exist only in the memories of those who attended them. This lack of continuity, stability and identity for state schools and colleges puts their former students at a genuine disadvantage compared with their public school counterparts.
Jeremy White
Buxton, Derbyshire

Tradesmen's tariff

Sir, Today we experienced Ulez's inflationary effect: our plumber's bill included a "Ulez surcharge".
Hugh Evans
Sutton, Surrey

THE PLEASURE OF MEALS ON TRAINS

FROM THE TIMES SEPTEMBER 6, 1923

No one would lay hand on heart and swear that the meals served in the luncheon cars of our long-distance trains were choice food. Considering the difficulties, they are surprisingly sound; usually well cooked, cleanly dished, and deftly served by obliging waiters. But there is nearly always turbot, or cod — fishes that, when they take the train, become as uninteresting as English travellers themselves. The choice between roast joint hot and pressed beef or ham cold seems no choice at all, but a double compulsion, as of pistols or swords to a timid duelist. And why is there nearly always gorgonzola cheese in the train, and why does one always eat and enjoy it there, and rarely anywhere else?

We have hit, perhaps, on one of the qualities which we bring to the enjoyment of meals in the train — that we are doing something unusual. Even frequent travellers (if we except the commercial traveller who, as a rule, avoids the restaurant-car) have more meals in a house than in a train. There is a spice of the adventurous, or at least the unfamiliar, in eating while food and fork and mouth and gastric juices are moving at fifty miles an hour. Railway restaurant-cars are all much alike; one soon becomes dulled to the difference between white panelling touched with gold and brown panelling inlaid with yellow, and all seem to have windows that will neither open nor shut. But still, none of them is our own dining-room; the plates are not our plates. And the adventure reaches its height when we try to pour out our ginger-ale while the train is going over points. And how ready we are for adventure! While we dutifully work through the turbot, the joint, and the roast potatoes, till we reach the sweetish biscuits and the gorgonzola, the world circles past our idle, interested eyes, swinging on the pivot of some distant wood or church or hill-top. And there are the stopping-places, always bestowing a thrill which meals in houses cannot give. Will anyone get into our carriage? Will they see through the sham of coats and bags which we have arranged on the empty places? Or the train may be making headlong for London; the first suburbs have been penetrated, and will the dinner will be done before the journey? Quick! let us finish our gorgonzola and pay the bill and go.

THETIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Asian hornet threat

Sir, The Asian hornet is a new and very serious threat to everyone, not just beekeepers ("Invasive species cost £336 billion a year — and problem is growing", Sep 5). It preys on honey bees and other pollinating insects, and in France there has been a decrease of 40 per cent in honey sales due to its presence. More importantly, we already have a massive decline in pollinators and anything that adds to that decline will cause huge problems for farmers and ultimately to all of us. One third of our food is dependent on pollinators. As I write, members of our association are volunteering a week of their time visiting Jersey, learning how to bait and track Asian hornets. There is no doubt that the Asian hornet is here: it is spreading so fast that we may be overcome.
Pauline Lane
Secretary, Guildford Beekeepers Association

Overlooked coach

Sir, Your headline to the extracts from Danny Cipriani's book, "Edwards was too working class to get the England job" Sep 5), is misleading. Many on the RFU council at the time, especially those from the north, were great admirers of Shaun Edwards as a player and a coach and wanted him to have a coaching role with England. It was proposed that he should be the England defence coach, but Shaun also wanted to retain his post as coach of Wasps. This was considered to be a conflict of interest by Premiership Rugby and the RFU offered Shaun the post of coach of the England Saxons. He rejected this and accepted an offer from Wales to be their defence coach while retaining his job at Wasps. So a combination of misunderstanding and cock-up prevented England from appointing one of the finest coaches of his generation.
Tim Stirk
RFU council 2003-14;
Lytham St Annes, Lancs

Rail ticket offices

Sir, At Paddington station a couple of weeks ago there were 20 people queuing for the three clerks on duty in the ticket office (letters and leading article, Sep 4). They were not "vulnerable" people, just a cross-section of the population. The concourse was packed, so the idea that one could easily buy tickets from staff there is fanciful — how would one find them? On arrival at Windsor there was a short queue at the ticket office there, mainly of tourists, who naturally rely on a real person to advise them, not a baffling machine. When considering the closure of ticket offices, busy stations and tourist destinations must be kept open.
Daniel Brittain-Catlin
London W10

Birds of a feather

Sir, Further to your report "For animal magnetism, opposites don't attract" (Sep 5), Holden Caulfield, aka JD Salinger, summed this up well in *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951): "Everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques. The guys that are on the basketball team stick together, the Catholics stick together, the goddam intellectuals stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together. Even the guys that belong to the goddam Book-of-the-Month Club stick together."
Dr Charlie Brooker
Sheffield

Daily Universal Register

UK: Mark Rowley, the Metropolitan Police commissioner, appears before the London Assembly police and crime committee.
Kenya: Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi.

Nature notes



The parrot waxcap season is under way. Also known as the parrot toadstool, this is a small mushroom whose stipe (the technical name for the stem) is usually 2cm to 6cm tall. Its cap ranges from about 2cm to 4cm. Small it might be, but it is visually stunning. When young, the parrot wax cap has a lurid green cap and an equally vivid yellow stipe. As it ages, the green fades to a dull yellow. Parrot waxcap is said to be edible, but rarely foraged due to its diminutive size and unappetising sliminess. Found in grassland, it can appear in woodland edges, graveyards, and fields. Look out for it too on unfertilised, chemical-free lawns. JONATHAN TULLOCH

Birthdays today



Alice Sebold, *pictured*, novelist, *The Lovely Bones* (2002), 60; **Bruce Arnold**, biographer of Margaret Thatcher, *Margaret Thatcher: A Study in Power* (1984), 87; **Jason Atherton**, chef, portfolio of Michelin-starred restaurants, 52; **Shirley Ballas**, dancer and coach, head judge on *Strictly Come Dancing*, 63; **Christopher Brookmyre**, novelist, *The Cliff House* (2022), 55; **Sir Simon Burns**, Conservative MP for Chelmsford (1987-2017), 71; **Idris Elba**, actor, *Hijack* (2023), 51; **Macy Gray**, singer-songwriter, *I Try* (1999), 56; **Naomie Harris**, actress, *Spectre* (2015), 47; **Tim Henman**, tennis player, former British No 1, 49; **Mathew Horne**, actor, *Gavin & Stacey* (2007-10), 45; **Sofi Jeannin**, chief conductor, BBC Singers, and mezzo-soprano, 47; **Roger Knight**, secretary and chief executive (1994-2006), president, Marylebone Cricket Club (2015-16), 77; **Roger Law**, satirist and puppeteer, co-creator of *Spitting Image* (1984-96, 2020), 82; **Emily Maitlis**, journalist and broadcaster, presenter, *Newsnight* (BBC2, 2006-21), 53; **Dame Monica Mason**, ballet dancer, vice-president, Royal Academy of Dance, director, Royal Ballet (2002-12), 82; **Pippa Matthews (née Middleton)**, sister of the Princess of Wales, 40; **Oisin Murphy**, jockey, 28; **Gavin Patterson**, chairman, Business in the Community (charity), president, Salesforce (2022-Jan 2023), chief executive, BT Group (2013-19), 56; **Rosie Perez**, actress, *White Men Can't Jump* (1992), 59; **William Porterfield**, cricketer, Warwickshire County Cricket Club (2011-17) and Ireland's first Test captain (2018-19), 39; **Tom Ransley**, rower, Olympic gold medallist (2016, men's coxed eight), 38; **Sir Richard J Roberts**, biochemist and molecular biologist (Nobel prize, 1993), 80; **Greg Rusedski**, tennis player, former British No 1, 50; **Sir Iqbal Sacranie**, secretary general, Muslim Council of Britain (2002-06), chairman, Muslim Aid (2008-12), 72; **Emma Soames**, editor-at-large, Saga Magazine, 74; **Sir Norman Stoller**, businessman, founder of the Stoller Charitable Trust, 89; **Roger Waters**, founding member, Pink Floyd, *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), 80.

On this day

In **1936** Beryl Markham, the English-born aviator, became the first person to fly solo, nonstop, across the Atlantic, east to west.

The last word

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness." Mark Twain, writer, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)

Martha's Rule

Patients and their relatives should by right be entitled to a second opinion if they believe an incorrect diagnosis has been made. And that right must be advertised

Anyone who has lost a loved one to a fatal misdiagnosis will know the lingering self-reproach that ensues. It is not, initially, the medical staff involved whom one blames, but oneself. Relatives who feel helpless as the medical machine swings into action in the struggle to save a life — desperate to trust in the competence of those fighting for a parent, partner or child — are loath to find fault with the doctors and nurses involved. But when the system fails and a life is lost through a mistake there remains a set of nagging questions in the mind of son or daughter, husband or wife, mother or father: should I have followed my instincts when I knew the diagnosis wasn't right? Should I have questioned what I was being told more forcefully as crucial hours ticked by? Should I have demanded a second opinion?

What often prevents those questions being asked at the critical juncture in hospital is deference: a natural but sometimes misplaced faith in the doctors or nurses involved. Consultants and registrars and nurses are not gods and they get it wrong, as in any other job. Relatives often know more about a patient's medical history than those providing treatment, and they are not distracted by other pressing cases. This is why the right to seek a second opinion is necessary.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that the government will move swiftly to enact what has become known as Martha's rule, the right to an automatic second opinion for patients or family members who suspect a threatening condition has been misidentified. The proposal takes its name from Martha Mills, who died of sepsis a few days before her fourteenth birthday in 2021. After suffering an internal injury in a cycling accident during a holiday in Wales Martha was transferred to King's College Hospital in London, where her sepsis went untreated until it was too late. Even as Martha's parents tried to raise the alarm about her deteriorating condition they were seemingly met with arrogance, condescension and apathy. The inquest into Martha's death concluded that she would probably have survived if the seriousness of her condition had been realised by doctors and nurses and she had been transferred to intensive care.

The formal aspect of the proposed rule is important: according to the National Health Service, second opinions are always available. But relatives dealing with an extreme situation — a loved one unaccountably in rapid decline — need a simple system allowing them to voice their concerns to a person outside the immediate medical team. The very fact of such a request, received and recorded by an outside party, is itself likely to dispel complacency and concentrate minds.

The medical profession is rightly held in high esteem by the public — though protracted strikes by hospital doctors have strained the relationship in recent months — but that respect should not blind patients and relatives to the potential failings of staff. Medical teams, understandably bound by ties of mutual loyalty forged in circumstances of great stress, and imbued with a deferential attitude to a governing consultant, are vulnerable to groupthink. Senior doctors should expect to be questioned, not only by more junior staff but also by concerned laymen. Airline captains do not take offence at having to fly with a co-pilot; neither should consultants feel insulted if a relative asks for a second diagnosis. Experience from Australia, where an explicit right to a second opinion exists, suggests relatives do not abuse this facility; formal requests for second opinions are rare.

Aviation has another lesson for medicine: air travel is generally safe because each mishap is rigorously interrogated for its causes, with lessons then disseminated. Likewise, hospital doctors, nurses and managers must rid themselves of the instinct to cover up mistakes and instead share their experiences. Then more lives will be saved.

Not Costing the Earth

Ministers are making welcome moves to lower the expense of the energy transition

When a revolt over the ultra-low emission zone, Ulez, cost Labour the Uxbridge by-election in July there were concerns that the government would walk away from its green agenda. That has not happened. Rishi Sunak knows that voters are worried about climate change: more than two thirds of adults support the aim of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. But cleaning up the economy is expensive; and that is, understandably, a concern.

The lesson the government has drawn from Uxbridge, therefore, is that it needs to mitigate the costs of the energy transition. This sensible conclusion explains the reversal of an eight-year-old moratorium on building onshore wind turbines.

Britain, being a blowy island, is a great spot for wind energy. It got off to a speedy start, building turbines on high ground until opposition from rural Tories led David Cameron's government to, in effect, ban them in 2015. Generous subsidies ensured that offshore wind farms boomed, but electricity generated offshore costs about twice as much as that generated on land. Since renewable energy is subsidised through energy bills, the higher the subsidy, the higher the bills.

The Conservative Party is divided over onshore wind farms. Many rural voters and MPs continue to oppose them. But other Tories are increasingly concerned that Nimbyism has trumped both the climate and economic growth.

In order to head off a revolt against the energy bill led by Sir Alok Sharma, former president of the Cop26 climate summit and a leading Tory green, the government has made a concession that should allow for more onshore wind projects. While in the past a single objector could, in effect, block such a scheme, in future onshore wind will be treated like any other renewable energy source. Councils will still be required to ensure broad local consent for a wind farm, but the bar to blocking one has been raised. The government is also looking at sharing the proceeds of wind farms with locals, possibly through cheaper electricity.

Another move designed to mitigate the costs of the energy transition looks imminent. The plan, devised this year, for a ban on installing oil-fired boilers from 2026 has aroused opposition, especially from people in parts of the countryside where gas is unavailable. They face the choice between electric boilers, which are expensive to run, or heat pumps, which are expensive to install. MPs with constituents vulnerable to the change want to soften the blow. One option is for fuel providers to be required to supply greener liquid fuels to replace oil; another is for an increase in the subsidy for heat pumps, which typically cost up to £13,000. These concessions should be made.

Ramping up onshore wind is vital. Renewables are not only essential to combat climate change, they form an essential component of Britain's energy security, reducing the country's exposure to fluctuations in foreign fossil fuel prices. But the wind does not always blow and a robust energy mix must include modular nuclear reactors as an all-weather insurance policy.

Britain was once in the vanguard of the transition to green energy but is now lagging. If it is to regain momentum, green policies must retain popular consent. For that to happen, the expense for both individuals and the nation needs to be minimised. Cost-conscious policy moves, on both wind energy and domestic heating, are therefore to be welcomed.

Mind the Gap

History is all very well, but what if you're in a rush?

It gets in the way. Of course it does. You can see it from space. Supposedly. So when two workers in China's Shanxi province decided to drive a bulldozer through the Great Wall of China, so as to cut their journey time, there is a strong argument that they were merely putting productivity first.

Here in the United Kingdom, campaigners have been battling National Highways for almost three decades over plans to dig a £1.7 billion tunnel under Stonehenge. Clearly vast savings could be made just going over the top, perhaps after laying the huge, ancient sarsens and bluestones on their sides, thereby creating a sturdy patch of road.

Let us not, however, be parochial. The Indian city of Agra is the fourth largest in Uttar Pradesh and growing fast. What a waste that such a large area on its outskirts is given over to the Taj Mahal. Perhaps the local authorities are unaware that it could be replaced with a shopping centre almost as large as Westfield London.

In Athens, the Parthenon cries out for redevelopment. Perhaps the Greeks could consider some high-rise housing? Existing marble could even be repurposed, save for any bits that could find a home in the British Museum. The Great Pyramid of Giza, meanwhile, could make a lovely casino.

Possibilities abound. Venice would be a considerably more convenient city if the canals were filled and replaced by roads. It is remarkable nobody has thought of this before. How much would helicopter travel around Paris benefit from the toppling of the Eiffel Tower? Is the Leaning Tower of Pisa really still required? It's halfway down already. What function is served by the great city of London itself, indeed, except to cause an enormous delay for anyone who might wish to drive from Croydon to Enfield?

It is all a question of priorities. So hooray for the workers of Shanxi, for reminding us of our own.

World

Europe braced for asylum applications to top one million

Europe
Bruno Waterfield Brussels

Calls for a British-style approach to processing asylum claims in non-European countries such as Rwanda are growing among EU members as official figures suggest that more than one million migrants will arrive in the bloc this year.

Statistics from the EU's Agency for Asylum (EUAA), which includes Norway and Switzerland, show that 519,000 asylum applications were lodged in the first six months of this year, with a projected return to levels not seen since the crisis of 2015 and 2016.

"Historically, the volume of applications tends to be higher in the second half of the year," the agency said. "If this pattern holds, by the end of the year more than one million asylum applications will be received in 2023."

In 2015 more than 1.2 million asylum claims were lodged in Europe, plunging the EU into one of its worst crises and contributing to Brexit.

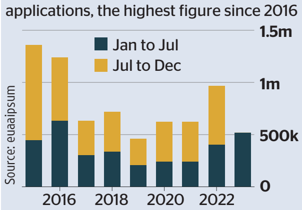
The EUAA alert coincides with deepening political divisions over migration across Europe.

Austria broke ranks this week to demand that the EU follow the controversial British model of processing claims in Rwanda or other countries outside Europe, despite the policy being blocked on legal and human rights grounds.

"Austria will continue to do its utmost in the EU to create the political and legal conditions for asylum procedures to be carried out already, outside the EU. We will not give in," Karl Nehammer, the chancellor, told Die Welt newspaper. "Corresponding agreements with third countries are possible, as the example of Rwanda shows."

EU asylum applications

The first six months of 2023 saw 519,000 applications, the highest figure since 2016



Austria, Denmark, Lithuania, Greece, Slovakia, Latvia, Malta and Estonia wrote to the European Commission in June warning that "the asylum system is broken".

The Danes, who have an opt-out from common EU refugee policy, entered into a British-style deal with Rwanda but decided after elections last year to suspend it — while pressuring other European countries to follow suit.

In July the EU signed a deal with President Saied of Tunisia to pay more than €1 billion in economic incentives in return for his help in stemming migration flows across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy and wider Europe, despite widespread claims of human rights abuses by his regime.

"The agreement between Tunisia and the EU on limiting illegal migration is groundbreaking," Nehammer said.

Migration is an increasingly divisive issue in all European nations, triggering elections in Poland in October and the Netherlands in November. Poland will also hold a referendum next month over proposals from the EU to impose migrant quotas or fine countries that refuse them.

The Dutch will go to the polls after the collapse of the government in the summer over plans to cut family reunification rights for asylum seekers. The elections are expected to push the country toward the populist right.

The issue of asylum is also likely to be a deciding issue in Europe-wide parliamentary elections scheduled for next year.

In Germany the rise of the nationalist Alternative for Germany (AfD) has pushed the Christian Democrats to the right, with pledges to introduce border controls alongside fast-track deportations of migrants.

Last week Belgium, traditionally refugee-friendly, refused to provide shelter for single men seeking asylum, prompting condemnation from the Council of Europe and other human rights watchdogs.

The new EUAA statistics show that the levels of asylum seekers seen during the migration crisis are becoming the new normal after a lull during the pandemic.

Asylum claims increased by 53 per cent last year and continued climbing in the first six months of this year as backlogs in processing claims grow across Europe.

"At the end of June 2023 some 682,000 cases were awaiting a first-instance decision, which is up by 34 per cent compared to a year ago," the agency said.

Statistics suggest that 59 per cent of claims will be turned down, raising the question of what happens to the failed asylum seekers. Last year 73,845 people were returned to their countries of origin from the EU.

Germany, France, Spain and Austria continue to be the main countries of destination for asylum seekers, with Syrians and Afghans submitting the most claims.



Brolly good show The finishing touches are applied to a traditional Indonesian

22 years in jail for mastermind of Capitol attack

United States
Hugh Tomlinson Washington

The former leader of the far-right Proud Boys militia was jailed for 22 years yesterday for spearheading the riot at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, the heaviest prison sentence handed down in connection with the fatal attack.

Enrique Tarrio, 39, was convicted of seditious conspiracy for plotting to halt the peaceful transfer of power and destroy a cornerstone of American democracy in a failed attempt to overturn Donald Trump's defeat by Joe Biden in the 2020 election.

At a packed hearing in Washington yesterday, US District Judge Timothy Kelly said Tarrio was "the ultimate leader of the conspiracy" but rejected the Justice Department's call for a 33-year sentence, saying he had not intended to kill. Kelly sentenced four other Proud Boy members to jail terms of 10 to 18 years last week for their role in the violence.

"That day broke our previously unbroken tradition of peacefully transferring power," Kelly said.

The former national chairman of the Proud Boys, Tarrio was not in Washington on January 6, having been arrested in a separate case two days earlier. Prosecutors argued that he remained the ringleader of the plot, however, orchestrating the violence as Proud Boys members launched their assault.

"Tarrio was the leader of this conspiracy … This defendant and his co-conspirators targeted our entire system of government … This was a calculated act of terrorism," Conor Mulroe, the Justice Department prosecutor, said. "If we don't have the peaceful transfer of power, then we don't have anything."



Enrique Tarrio led but did not take part in the attack

Tarrio's defence team argued that he could not have directed the Proud Boys' operations at the Capitol from outside Washington. Sabino Jauregui, his lawyer, insisted his client was "the leader of the Proud Boys" but "not the leader of January 6" and that the violence was "not his plan, not his idea, not what he wanted", adding: "My client is no terrorist. My client is a misguided patriot … He thought he was saving this country, this republic."

Kelly rejected the claim, quoting a message that Tarrio sent to the group on January 6 as the violence mounted: "Make no mistake, we did this."

Tarrio was a key target for prosecutors in what has become the biggest Justice Department investigation in US history. Hundreds of other rioters have already been jailed for their role in the attack, which climaxed in an armed siege at the doors of the House of Representatives where one protester was shot dead. Hundreds were injured, including more than 150 police officers. One officer who was assaulted died the next day and four more took their own lives in the weeks that followed.

The Proud Boys shot to prominence under Trump's presidency. The prosecution said the Proud Boys saw themselves as "Trump's army" and were prepared to launch "all-out war" to stop Biden taking office.

Great Wall no

China
Richard Spencer China Correspondent

The Great Wall of China has suffered many indignities over the centuries: tourists have often danced, drunk and even urinated on it.

Now a construction team from rural Youyu, on the border between Inner Mongolia and the province of Shanxi, west of Beijing, has been accused of being so contemptuous of the wall's historic glories that it took a bulldozer to it and knocked part of it down. The purpose was to plough a road through to create a shortcut for equipment to pass along to a nearby building site.

The Shanxi Cultural Relics Bureau announced this week that a man aged 38 and a woman aged 55 had been arrested in connection with a hole that had suddenly appeared in the wall.

The bureau said the police had been

India serves up ‘poor man’s grain’ for the G20 summit
Page 28

Bedbugs offer French film fans a real screen test
Page 29

SYAMSUL HUDA YUDHA/SOLENT NEWS



umbrella at a plant in Klaten, east of Jakarta. Each of the delicately painted patterned parasols takes a day to complete

Pope takes control of shrine in blow to power of Opus Dei

Spain
Isambard Wilkinson Madrid

A basilica-shrine surrounded by the picturesque hills of Aragon in Spain has become the latest battlefield in a power struggle involving the Pope and Opus Dei, one of the Roman Catholic Church’s most powerful groups.

Francis, who was the first member of the Society of Jesus to be named as pope, has taken up the cudgels for the Jesuits in their confrontation with Opus Dei, reducing its autonomy within the Church and scrapping its privileged status. But by removing Opus Dei’s control over its grandiose basilica headquarters near Barbastro he has incensed the group’s members.

The Marian shrine of Torreciudad was developed into a basilica in 1975 by Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. The group was shocked when Ángel Pérez, Bishop of Barbastro-Monzón, fired Ángel Lasheras as the shrine’s rector, replacing him with a non-Opus Dei parish priest, José Mairal.

“We’re all asking what have we done to deserve this,” a senior Opus Dei member said. The group is particularly angry that the shrine has been placed under the auspices of a humble parish priest from an unimportant bishopric.

In public the ultra-conservative group has remained relatively mute, reaffirming its loyalty to the Pope. But it released a statement expressing its “surprise”, adding that it was a “unilateral” decision by Pérez and that “it is not up to the bishop to carry out this appointment since it is a church of the Prelature [of Opus Dei].”

Justifying his decision, the bishop said that two years ago the two parties began a process “to adapt the sanctuary’s legal regime to current needs” but that Opus Dei had not fully collaborated with his demands.

The group retorted that the shrine belonged to them, both in terms of property and as an oratory. It added that it had tried to come to an agreement about the shrine’s future but that the process had “not been exempt from difficulties of understanding and interpretation on the part of the diocese”.

Lasheras had been due to take office on Friday but instead negotiations between the two sides continued.

The sanctuary has enormous religious and economic importance for Opus Dei. It has received more than ten million pilgrims since it was inaugurated and last year had an income of more than €1.2 million.

Last month the Pope promulgated a *motu proprio* reducing Opus Dei’s special status and weakening its relationship with its followers. Its lay wing, for example, will now be associates and no longer full members and will be assigned a parish priest based on the address where they live.

Critics claim Opus Dei is a secretive and conservative religious order of well-placed people who form a near-Masonic shadowy influence behind Spain’s political and financial elite.

But supporters say it lifted Spain off its knees in years of poverty and reaffirmed doctrinal Roman Catholicism.

Five of its members were ministers underGeneral Franco, the Spanish dictator, but Opus Dei’s influence has dwindled in recent years, yet it remains a potent force. It owns a host of schools and colleges, has influence in the judiciary, banking, the armed forces and the Spanish right, especially in the Popular Party.

The group, which has 85,000 members, about half of them Spanish, is accused by liberal Catholics of being elitist and of trying to “create a church within the Church”. Some critics say that Escrivá, the son of an Aragonese shopkeeper, was self-obsessed, snobbish, a Nazi apologist and stooge of Franco. Escrivá was canonised in 2002. Although Opus Dei was once widely viewed as cult-like — an image fostered by Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* — it has become more transparent and ended some of its ultra-conservative practices, such as banning women members from wearing trousers.

barrier to builders in search of a shortcut



A bulldozer was used to knock the wall

called after damage was reported in a section dating back to the Ming dynasty in the 14th and 15th centuries. “After an on-site examination of the evidence, the police determined that the ancient wall had been damaged by the use of large machinery,” the bureau said. The officers followed the trail left in the mud by the digger’s tracks, which led over the border into the Horinger district of Inner Mongolia, a theoretically autonomous but a directly controlled province of China. The man and woman found to be operating it were arrested and questioned. The couple had apparently found a breach in the wall and used the digger to widen it. They said they had been working on a nearby construction project and the wall blocked a shortcut.

The wall in Shanxi province is not as grand as those parts north of Beijing visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. Those are constructed — and in many cases have been recently reconstructed — of hard grey bricks, and cut a striking image as they traverse the tops of the mountains, with their watchtowers visible for miles. Much of the wall to the west of Beijing is simpler and, like the stretches in Shanxi, built from packed mud and mud-bricks, twisting round a gentle green landscape. They have suffered substantial erosion from the winds sweeping south from the Mongolian steppe, as well as repeated destruction in the name of development, especially before the cultural authorities reasserted themselves in the past few decades.

Bricks and stone from the wall are suspected to have been used in houses built all along a curve that stretches 2,000 miles across the country — the total length of the network of fortifications collectively described in Chinese as the “Long Wall” is disputed.

A report by China’s national cultural heritage administration in 2012 estimated that more than a fifth of the wall had disappeared.

Hooray for the Shanxi workers’ priorities, leading article, page 25

Plate-sized surgical device left in C-section patient

New Zealand
Bernard Lagan Sydney

A medical device the size of a dinner plate was left inside a patient at New Zealand’s largest hospital.

The Alexis wound retractor, a tubal instrument used to hold open surgical wounds, was only removed 18 months after the woman, who is in her twenties, had a caesarean section.



She visited her GP several times after she gave birth in 2020, even going to the hospital’s emergency department because of the pain. The device was discovered when she had a CT scan.

Health authorities initially claimed they had not failed to exercise reasonable care and skill. The country’s health and disability commissioner disagreed in findings released on Monday.

“It is self-evident the care fell below the appropriate standard,” Morag McDowell said. “Staff have no explanation for how the retractor ended up in the abdominal cavity, or why it was not identified prior to closure.”

The device is made of transparent plastic fixed on two rings, and cannot be detected by x-rays. Staff at Auckland City Hospital had replaced the first retractor they used with a larger one, which was left in the woman’s abdomen.

India makes a meal of 'poor man's grain' for G20 leaders

India
Amrit Dhillon Delhi

Anyone for a nice rustic millet brioche? Or a fricassee with a hint of millet? On the menus of all the luxury hotels and venues for the G20 summit in Delhi is what used to be known as the poor man's food: millet.

Chefs have been asked by the government to create new ways to showcase millet in Indian and western dishes. Dismissed by some as virtually a weed, which grows without water, fertiliser or care, it was a staple for centuries before being replaced by rice and wheat. In recent years India has embraced the cereal grain once again.

The country is one of the largest growers of millet in the world, alongside Nigeria and China.

At India's behest, the UN has declared 2023 the International Year of Millets, hoping to create demand for the grain, which is touted as a potential "superfood" full of vitamins and antioxidants.



Sorghum upma, a South Indian vegetable dish, is made with millet

Indian chefs are lauding its subtle and nutty flavours and incorporating it into "new age" dishes worthy of banquet tables at the G20 summit, to be held on Saturday and Sunday.

Grandmothers are being encouraged to rediscover old recipes featuring the grain, which fell out of favour when the agricultural revolution of the 1960s boosted rice and wheat cultivation.

Some Indian Michelin-starred restaurants feature millet-based dishes. However, for palates accustomed to the texture and taste of rice and wheat, millet can taste coarse and alien, critics say, except when added to breads, cakes, biscuits and confectionery.

Arun Sundararaj, director of culinary operations at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Delhi, said the grain was surprisingly versatile. "Even in western dishes you can add millet along with, say, sun-dried tomatoes and olives, to a lasagne or cannelloni filling."

Guests at the hotel can expect novelties such as barnyard millet nasi goreng, ragi mysore masala dosa, mixed millet watermelon salad, edamame and amaranth salad, yaki soba noodles, millet risotto and Belgian dark foxtail fudge.

It is not millet's first appearance on a VIP menu: when Narendra Modi, the prime minister, attended a White House dinner in June, he was served a first course of millet salad with grilled corn.

Rupa Balachandar, the food writer and television presenter, sings the praises of millet as "drought-proof, gluten-free, rich in fibre and protein and causing no harm to the soil or environment". She uses it extensively at home. "The taste buds have to be reconfigured but it's worth the effort," she said. "Rural Indians ate these grains for thousands of years and enjoyed their health benefits."

At least 18 world leaders are expected to attend the summit, and virtually all of Delhi's roads, normally gridlocked in the city of 30 million people, will be heavily restricted to allow G20 leaders and delegates free movement.

● The official dinner invitation has been issued by the "President of Bharat", fuelling rumours that India could change its name.

Bharat is the Hindi name for India and used by members of the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

Opposition MPs have complained about its use at the G20 but Bharat has some influential supporters, including Bollywood royalty, in the form of actor Amitabh Bachchan and former test cricketer Virender Sehwag, who said the name should be on the team's shirts.

Xi's G20 snub smacks of China saving face, Roger Boyes, page 22

MABONDO/ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES



We will hold free election, vows Gabon coup leader

Crowds cheered Gabon's new military leader on Monday as he vowed to hold "free, transparent and credible elections" while being sworn in as president (Richard Assheton writes).

General Brice Oligui Nguema, who led army officers in a coup to topple the family dynasty which ruled Gabon for more than five decades last week, gave no date for elections, however.

Nguema, 48, and his Republican Guard, whose job it was to protect the president, instead deposed Ali Bongo, the country's leader, last Wednesday after disputing his claim to have won a national election.

Nguema, who is a cousin of the deposed president and previously served his father, described the coup as a brave move to save Gabon from bloodshed.

Bongo's father, Omar, had previously ruled the country from 1967 to 2009. His son had been criticised for not sharing the country's wealth, leaving a third of the population in poverty.

The coup has been largely welcomed, but the Gabonese opposition has described it as a "palace revolution" given Nguema's links to the Bongos. World leaders have also reacted with concern at another African nation falling under military rule.

General Brice Oligui Nguema was sworn in as the president of Gabon after leading a coup last week

Nguema has vowed to root out corruption. "With the new government … we're going to give everyone a chance to hope," he said, proposing a referendum over a new constitution.

But on Monday Eccas, Central Africa's regional bloc, suspended Gabon, a former French colony which is also a member of the Commonwealth, for rejecting its western-backed civilian leaders.

Ailing Suu Kyi 'refused treatment by junta'

Myanmar
Richard Lloyd Parry Asia Editor

The British son of Aung San Suu Kyi, the imprisoned Myanmar democracy leader, has said she is desperately ill but that the military junta is refusing to allow her urgent medical treatment.

Kim Aris, 46, who lives in London, told The Times: "To deny a sick prisoner access to recommended medical care is callous and cruel. To the best of my knowledge my mother has been vomiting and has severe dizziness as a result of her ill health. Urgent care has been recommended by the prison authorities but this has been denied."

He added: "I urge the authorities in Burma to relent and act in a humane way."

His plea coincides with a warning from Retno Marsudi, foreign minister of Indonesia, that the credibility of southeast Asian nations was at stake unless it tackled the crisis in Myanmar, which remains a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean). Leaders of the regional bloc will meet in Jakarta next week.

"The eyes of our peoples are on us to prove Asean still matters," Retno said.

Efforts to put pressure on the junta by relatively democratic countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia have been opposed by more authoritarian regimes in Cambodia and Thailand.

The junta, under General Min Aung Hlaing, deposed and arrested the elected Suu Kyi, 78, in a coup in February 2021. She is serving a 27-year sentence under house arrest for 19 separate criminal convictions, which her supporters insist are trumped up to keep her out of politics.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won an overwhelming election victory in November 2020, humiliating the party of the armed forces. Months later they forced her from power.

Early peaceful protests have given way to a bitter, brutal and unequal civil war between the forces of the junta and determined but poorly equipped local resistance fighters who act in the name of the exiled National Unity Government.

Human rights monitors have recorded 24,674 arrests since the coup by the junta and 4,035 deaths.

Prince Harry's charity buys rhino breeding farm

South Africa
Richard Assheton

One in seven of the world's white rhinos are to be released into the wild after the largest farm breeding the animals was sold to Prince Harry's African conservation charity.

African Parks has bought Platinum Rhinos farm, which has 2,000 southern white rhinos, 15 per cent of the world's population. It is to release them into the wild over ten years.

The South African-based charity is backed by benefactors including the family that founded Walmart and Hansjörg Wyss, the Swiss tycoon who co-owns Chelsea Football Club. With Harry as its president, the charity has become known for its tough approach to conservation, with armed rangers protecting 22 areas around Africa.

After nearly dying out a hundred years ago, white rhino numbers rebounded to 20,000 by 2012. But poachers have targeted them for their horns, which fetch up to £55,000 per kilogram, knocking the population back to below 13,000.

African Parks said in June it had flown 16 southern white rhinos from South Africa to Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo, to replace lost northern white rhinos.

Bedbug nuisance gets under people's skin

France
Adam Sage Paris

A cinema chain has apologised to customers who emerged from blockbuster films such as *Barbie* with blotchy red skin after falling victim to an invasion of bedbugs in France.

The bugs are present in at least some of UGC's cinemas, the chain admits. But it says there are no grounds for compensating victims because the insects have also infested "every public place" in France.

A recent government report said the bugs had spread to about 11 per cent of French households and were causing sleep loss, mental health problems and absenteeism.

The ecology ministry said they had disappeared from France in the 1950s but returned four decades later amid the boom in international air travel and after becoming resistant to insecticides.

With the bugs having reached hotels and holiday rentals as well, their seeming unstoppable advance is an embarrassment to the French authorities, a year before the Paris Olympics.

They are not the only insect causing concern in Paris, parts of which were fumigated for the first time last month to combat tiger mosquitoes. They are common in tropical countries and are progressing in northern Europe in what may be a consequence of climate change. The fumigation came after a Paris resident caught dengue fever, which is carried by the mosquitoes.

UGC found itself trending on Twitter/X after a 53-year-old Parisian filmgoer said that she had been bitten last month in its Bercy cinema in the capital. "I had my back and arms covered in stings. For the next few days, I scratched until I bled and I couldn't sleep at night," the civil servant, named only as Nawal, said.

A second customer said that he had watched *Barbie* in UGC's Les Halles cinema in central Paris, only to find red spots on his wrists when he left. Others posted similar tales on social media.

The chain, which has 50 cinemas across France, initially sought to ignore the controversy before performing a U-turn this week as filmgoers threatened to stage a boycott. It published a statement in which it said that it was "sincerely sorry for all the victims of bedbug bites".

It said the "scourge of bedbugs concerns all public places along with private homes in France".

When bugs were reported in its cinemas, the chain brought in sniffer dogs to verify the accuracy of the claims, it said.

If bugs are found to be present, they are eradicated by dry steam pumped out at 180C. UGC sought to avoid lawsuits with a claim that bedbugs were now so common in France that it was impossible to determine whether individual victims had been bitten in its cinemas or elsewhere.

Bedbugs have been discovered this year in theatres, hospitals and prisons in France but also on the Marseilles underground network.

Dr Pascal Delaunay, a parasitologist at Nice University Hospital, said: "It is the only insect that causes such psychological discomfort." He said that an infestation of bedbugs left homeowners in "permanent uncertainty".

All German jobs 'will use AI by 2035'

Germany
Oliver Moody Berlin

Every job in Germany will involve working with artificial intelligence by the middle of the next decade, a senior minister has forecast.

Hubertus Heil, the labour minister, said the technology could ease the country's chronic shortages of skilled labour and streamline its bureaucracy.

Ministerial speeches have praised the potential of AI but there are concerns about heavy regulation, job losses and slow adoption by businesses. Studies suggest that fewer than one in ten German companies use AI.

Heil, however, argued that AI would change work rather than eliminate it. "We're going to try to bring AI to the streets of Germany," he told an audience in Berlin. "We want to build up people's confidence in AI."

In recent years several reports have bemoaned the way that German universities produce world-class AI scientists and big ideas in computer science, only for them to flourish elsewhere. Several leading lights have moved to America. Common complaints include a restrictive approach to data and public-sector institutions that still largely run on physical documents.

In April Olaf Scholz's coalition government vowed to spend €3 billion building a quantum computer to make up ground Germany had lost to the US and China in the race for control of ultrafast processors that are expected to underpin the next generation of AI.

ROBYN BECK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Standing tall Giant sequoias that have survived for thousands of years show the impact of wildfires that hit Kings Canyon National Park near Fresno, California

One dead as tourists stranded on island

Greece
David Harding

Hundreds of tourists were stranded on the Greek holiday island of Skiathos after it was hit by torrential rain and flash floods yesterday.

At least one person was killed after being carried away by flood waters and another was reported missing during the downpours.

Officials said the amount of water that fell in 24 hours was the same amount of rainfall usually expected for the whole of autumn.

British tourists were mostly said to be stranded at the island's airport, with no way of immediately returning home, as flights were cancelled.

Greek police banned travel to Skiathos, as well as the regional capital, Volos, and nearby Pelion.

Some tourists went on social media to claim that food was running low and power supplies had been cut. Images showed streets submerged under rainfall, flood waters raging through streets, and a car being washed out to sea.



People tried to save their belongings as torrential rain battered Skiathos

"The weather conditions are extreme and there are many delays in airport connections", Savvas Karagiannis, spokesman for Fraport, the German company that manages Greece's regional airports, told AFP. Volos saw 200 millimetres (about eight inches) of rain, while 600mm has fallen in the neighbouring village of Zagora, according to the National Meteorological Service (EMY).

The extreme weather was expected to continue, with the EMY warning that it could affect the country until tomorrow, with "the authorities on high alert", according to the government.

Storm Daniel is causing the flooding across the region. The rains came after Greece has been devastated by ferocious wildfires this summer.

A fire raging over the past two weeks destroyed swathes of the Dadia national park in the northern Evros region. Classified as a "megafire", the blaze raging in Dadia destroyed more than 200,155 acres of the forested area, protected by the European agency Natura 2000.

Florentine fountain feels force of Instagram vandal

Italy
Oliver Moody Berlin

A German tourist is facing a hefty fine after damaging a 16th-century fountain in Florence as he clambered up it to pose for a picture.

The man, 22, is accused of climbing the Fountain of Neptune, which was completed in 1569, knocking a chunk of marble off the sea god's chariot and cracking a horse's hoof. The repair bill has been estimated at €5,000.

Dario Nardella, the mayor of Florence, published a CCTV clip and a copy of the resulting photograph with the tourist's face pixelated. He was tracked down within hours. "The alarm system worked," Nardella wrote on Twitter/X.

"Thanks to the CCTV this person has been identified and will pay a heavy fine. There is no justification [for] vandalism of cultural heritage."

The fountain was commissioned by the Florentine duke Cosimo de' Medici and was intended to symbolise the marriage of his heir to the grand duchess of Austria.

Over the centuries, the fountain has survived graver threats than German Instagrammers. In 1580 it was badly vandalised; in 1830 one of its bronze satyrs was carted off by a gaggle of drunken youths; and in 1848 the ensemble was damaged by the Bourbon cannons that bombarded the city.

After a series of minor knocks since the 1980s it was restored in 2019 with the help of a €1.5 million donation from the shoe designer Salvatore Ferragamo.

Russians tricked us into their war, claim Cubans

Cuba
Stephen Gibbs Caracas

Cubans are being recruited by traffickers to fight for Russia in Ukraine, the government has said.

A statement by the foreign ministry in Havana said Cubans living in Russia and Cuba had been "incorporated into the military forces taking part in the war in Ukraine". It stressed that "Cuba has a firm and clear historical position against the use of mercenaries" and was actively working to dismantle the network.

In May Ryazinformburo, a Russian Telegram channel, reported that Cubans were being enlisted to fight in Ukraine, attracted by an offer of citizenship for foreigners who served for one year with the Russian army.

On Sunday the Miami-based Telemundo network interviewed two young Cuban men in Russia who said they had been duped into signing a mercenary contract. They said they had travelled to Moscow and then Ukraine believing they would be doing construction work "to rebuild the cities destroyed by the war".

One of the men, Alex Vega, said he was offered £1,600 a month, along with the prospect of a Russian passport and travel expenses. Given the dire situation in Cuba he said "he didn't think twice" before accepting.

When he arrived at Moscow airport he said was received by the woman who had messaged him and "a soldier with a Cuban accent". The woman "told us we had to be in military clothing, and this was normal".

Vega said he was sent to Luhansk, in the Russian-occupied Donbas region of Ukraine, where he and other Cubans "were given weapons, backpacks, all the military equipment". At that point he said it became clear "that they would be sent to war". He asked to return immediately to Cuba but was told that was not possible.

Vega, now apparently back in a military base in the western Russian city of Ryazan, told Telemundo he was "a prisoner of war". He said there were 200 other Cubans who had travelled to Russia with him.

Cuba and its state-run media have largely followed the Russian version of events in Ukraine, portraying the war as a defensive "military operation" provoked by Nato aggression.

LIBKOS/AP



A soldier of Ukraine's 3rd Separate Assault Brigade waits for evacuation near Bakhmut, a site of fierce battles with Russian forces

Ukrainian drone 'is shot down near Putin's home'

Russia
Marc Bennetts

A suspected Ukrainian drone was shot down close to one of President Putin's residences yesterday morning, according to the Russian defence ministry.

Officials said air defences had brought down three drones heading for Moscow, including one that broke up and crashed to the ground in the village of Zavidovo, where Putin's "Rus" residence is located. Video published by Mash, a Russian media outlet, showed a blast lighting up the sky near the property.

There is no indication that Putin, who has numerous homes across Russia, was in Zavidovo, which is about 75 miles north of the capital, at the time. His main residence is the Novo-Ogaryovo estate, about 18 miles west of central Moscow. However, the news will jangle nerves among the country's elite.

The Russian defence ministry said it also intercepted drones in the Kaluga region, southwest of Moscow, and Istra, 40 miles from the capital. A commercial building was damaged but there were no reports of injuries.

Margarita Simonyan, the head of the Kremlin-funded RT media outlet, said last month that a drone had landed close to her home in the upmarket Istra district. It came after drone attacks on Moscow's financial district and the Kremlin itself.

Last week, Ukraine said it had carried out a drone attack on Pskov, a Russian military airport about 400 miles from the border. President Zelensky said after the attack that Ukraine had developed a new weapon that could strike deep into Russia. He did not give details. However, Ukrainian military intelligence said that the drones had been launched from inside Russia.

A suspected Ukrainian S-200 missile was also shot down as it hurtled towards Moscow last month. Ukraine has modified the Soviet-era surface-to air missiles to enable them to hit targets on the ground. Kyiv released an interview with a Russian helicopter pilot who defected last month. Maksim Kuzminov, 28, flew a Russian Mi-8 helicopter into Ukraine after contacting Ukrainian military intelligence and arranging for his family to be whisked out of Russia. In an interview released by Ukrainian television, he hit out at the Kremlin's false depiction of Ukraine as a "neo-Nazi regime".

He said: "The truth is, there are no Nazis or fascists [in Ukraine]. It's a real disgrace what is happening here. Murder, tears, blood. People are simply killing each other. That's all I can make of this and I don't want to be a part of it. What is going on now is simply the genocide of the Ukrainian people. Both Ukrainian and Russian."

He urged other members of the Russian military to defect.

Kuzminov's two fellow crew members were unaware that he planned to fly into Ukraine and were "eliminated" when the helicopter touched down, Kyrylo Budanov, the head of Ukrainian military intelligence, said. "We would prefer [to take] them alive, but it is what it is," he said.

The operation was carried out shortly before Russia began staging elections in occupied areas of eastern and southern Ukraine. Ukrainian media reports said that groups of armed people had been going from door to door to force people to vote. The SBU, the Ukrainian state security service, has charged 3,500 "collaborators" with helping Russian officials to hold the elections in Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia. Putin said last year that Russia was annexing the four regions, despite not fully controlling any of them.

Ukrainians in the Kremlin-held regions have also been warned that they will no longer be entitled to pensions, medical care or unrestricted travel if they do not accept Russian passports before the end of October, people with relatives trapped in the occupied areas told The Times.

"People are hiding from election officials — very few of them want to take part in this farce," Oleksandr, who has family members in the occupied areas of the Kherson region, told The Times.

Flames engulf British tank

Marc Bennetts

A pro-Russian official in Ukraine says that a British Challenger 2 tank has been "destroyed" by Russian forces in what would be the first time one of the powerful battle tanks has been lost in combat.

Video footage posted to social media shows a Challenger 2 engulfed in flames on the side of the road. It is believed to have been filmed near Robotyne, a village in Zaporizhzhia that was recently retaken by Kyiv's forces.

An analyst said, however, it was far from certain that the tank in the video was a write-off.

It "certainly doesn't show the shell of a Challenger 2 that's clearly beyond redemption," said Michael Clarke, a British defence and security analyst. "The question is, is it destroyed or is it just damaged? If it's just damaged, there's a very good chance of it being repaired."



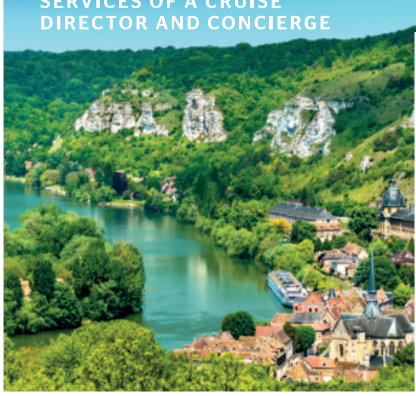
The Challenger 2 seen in a video

The Seine, Paris and Normandy

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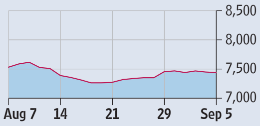
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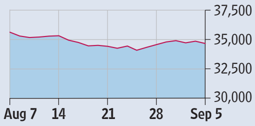
Business

WORLD MARKETS (Change on the day)

FTSE 100
7,437.93 (-14.83) ▼

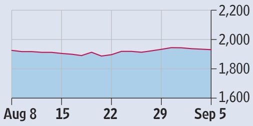


Dow Jones
34,641.97 (-195.75) ▼

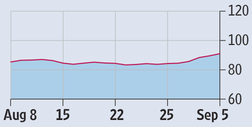


COMMODITIES

Gold
$1,932.12 (-6.59) ▼

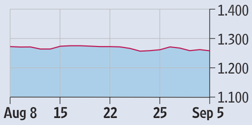


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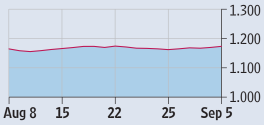


CURRENCIES

£/$
$1.2580 (-0.0048) ▼



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G20 leaders warned to brace for more turmoil in financial system

Ben Martin Banking Editor

Rising interest rates are set to cause further shockwaves in global markets in the coming months, the world's top financial regulator has warned G20 leaders.

The Financial Stability Board said yesterday that economic growth was faltering in the face of higher borrowing costs, as central banks scramble to lift interest rates to cool inflation. These higher rates have caused stresses in the financial system and contributed to the implosion in the spring of regional US lenders and Credit Suisse, one of Switzerland's biggest banks. In a letter to world leaders attending the G20 summit in Delhi this weekend, Klaas Knot, chairman of the FSB, cautioned that more turmoil lay ahead.

"There will certainly be further challenges and shocks facing the global financial system in the months and years to come," he said. "But it is possible, through concerted policy action by authorities, for the financial system to absorb rather than amplify these shocks."

The Bank of England's base rate has been lifted from a record low of 0.1 per cent in November 2021 to a 14-year high of 5.25 per cent as it seeks to contain inflation that reached a 41-year peak of 11.1 per cent in October. While the annual inflation rate fell to 6.8 per cent in July, it is still well above the Bank's 2 per cent target. The Bank has signalled that the country faces a prolonged period of higher rates, meaning more pain in store for mortgage holders and other borrowers.

The FSB, based in Basel, co-ordinates financial rules for the world's largest economies. It was set up 14 years ago after the 2007-9 financial crisis as part of efforts to make the banking system safer. Knot, who is president of the Dutch central bank, has chaired the FSB since 2021. In his latest letter, he sounded a warning about leverage accumulating in non-bank financial intermediation (NBFI), also known as shadow banking, a term that encompasses everything from pension schemes to hedge funds. "If not properly managed, leverage can amplify stress in the event of a shock and lead to systemic disruption, as demonstrated by recent strains in commodities and bond markets," he said.

Arm aims for $52bn valuation

Blockbuster listing to revive ailing IPO market

Callum Jones
US Business Correspondent

Arm has set its sights on a $52 billion initial public offering, stoking expectations of a potential payday of almost $100 million for its array of investment banks and advisers.

The chip designer, Britain's most successful technology company, confirmed plans to raise up to $4.87 billion (£3.88 billion) as executives embarked on a roadshow to persuade investors to back its return to the stock market.

A valuation for Arm of $52 billion would fall short of goals of as much as $70 billion mooted earlier this year, and the $64 billion valuation at which its owner, SoftBank, bought a stake only last month. It would, nevertheless, amount to a blockbuster listing — the biggest in New York since Rivian, the electric vehicle manufacturer, floated in 2021, and is expected to buoy the IPO market globally after many months of muted activity. The stock is expected to debut under the ticker Arm next week.

Arm has support from a band of "cornerstone" investors, including Apple, Google, Nvidia and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, which have signalled their interest in buying shares worth $735 million.

Japan's Softbank bought Arm for $32 billion in 2016, and tried to sell the business to Nvidia for $66 billion, only for the deal to collapse following competition concerns last year. Last month it bought the 25 per cent of Arm it did not already directly own from its Vision Fund, which is backed by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund and the UAE's Mubadala.

Arm will offer 95.5 million American depository shares for between $47 and $51 apiece. SoftBank will still own 90.6 per cent of ordinary shares after the offering, the company said, and will not receive any proceeds from the IPO.

The decision by Arm, based in Cambridge, to head across the Atlantic for its flotation — despite intense lobbying for a return to London, where it was listed until 2016 — was widely regarded as a blow to the British technology scene.

As SoftBank looked to plant Arm on the Nasdaq, it lined up no fewer than 28 banks to underwrite the flotation, with Barclays, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan and Mizuho appointed as leads. It is set to pay them as much as 2 per cent of what it raises, according to Bloomberg News. Arm declined to comment.

Arm was founded more than three decades ago as a joint venture between Acorn, Apple and VLSI. It has 5,963 employees, 2,785 of them based in the UK. It creates the blueprints for microchips and licences these designs to companies such as Apple, Nvidia and Qualcomm, and claims that about 70 per cent of the world's population uses Arm-based products.

Rene Haas, who has led the business for 18 months, is set to receive cash and shares worth $40 million after the IPO. Two unnamed executives have also been granted stock awards worth $35 million, set to vest during the three years after the company goes public.

VICKIE FLORES/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK



Cut scenes Warner Bros Discovery has said it expects up to half a billion dollars to be wiped of its adjusted profits this year because of strikes by Hollywood actors and writers, which forced it to delay the release of blockbusters such as the sequel to Dune. The strike prevents stars like Zendaya and Timothée Chalamet from promoting the film. Ashtead takes hit, page 36

More than 1,000 Wilko staff lose jobs

Isabella Fish Retail Editor

More than 1,000 Wilko employees will lose their jobs after administrators failed to find a buyer for 52 of the British discount chain's shops, destroying hopes of a fairy-tale ending for the stricken retailer.

Administrators confirmed yesterday that the first round of store closures will take place next week, with 24 branches shutting on September 12 and 28 stores shutting two days later, resulting in 1,016 job losses. A source close to the situation said "no one wanted to buy them and they were running out of stock, so it makes economic sense to close them." PwC said the locations of the affected stores would be published today.

The administrators also confirmed that there would be a further 299 redundancies at the two distribution centres in Worksop and Newport, effective from tomorrow.

Edward Williams, joint administrator, said: "In the absence of viable offers for the whole business, very sadly store closures and redundancies of team members from those stores are now necessary, in addition to the already announced redundancies at the support centre and distribution centres. We know this has been a deeply unsettling time for everyone concerned and would like to express our gratitude to all Wilko team members for the dedication and support they have continued to give the business in the most trying of circumstances."

It marks the second round of redundancies since Wilko collapsed into administration last month. Administrators confirmed last week that 269 head office staff would be made redundant after a last-minute offer for the entire company collapsed.

Yesterday B&M said it had agreed to buy up to 51 Wilko stores for about £13 million. The Liverpool-based chain did not confirm which Wilko shops it had bought, or how many posts could be saved as a result of the deal.

Hope remained that buyers would be found for the remaining parts of the business on a piecemeal basis, but the risk has increased for the 11,000-or-so staff and 300 stores.

Andy Prendergast, national secretary at the GMB union, said: "We are

Continued on page 32

Need to know

1 Residents have been promised discounts on energy bills if they consent to wind farms nearby, after a ban on turbines was relaxed in a deal with Tory rebels. Planning rules were changed last night to make clear that a single local objection cannot block onshore wind as Rishi Sunak moved to head off a looming Commons defeat. **Pages 1, 6**

2 Shoplifting "is just not seen as a crime any more", the chairman of Asda has said after a rising number of thefts have hit supermarkets. Lord Rose says that he wants more to be done to tackle the issue with Co-Op figures showing police are failing to respond to 71 per cent of serious retail crimes reported. **Page 9**

3 Elon Musk has threatened to sue the US-based Anti-Defamation League, which he claims is trying to "kill" X, formerly known as Twitter. The ADL has been highlighting what it believes is the rise of antisemitism on Twitter/X since Musk took over the platform. **Page 13**

4 Arm, the chip designer — Britain's most successful technology company — set its sights on a $52 billion initial public offering, stoking expectations of a potential payday of almost $100 million for its array of investment banks and advisers. **Page 31**

5 Rising interest rates are set to cause further shockwaves in global markets in the coming months, the world's top financial regulator has warned G20 leaders. The Financial Stability Board said economic growth was faltering in the face of higher borrowing costs. **Page 31**

6 More than 1,000 Wilko employees will lose their jobs after administrators failed to find a buyer for 52 of the British discount chain's shops, destroying hopes of a fairy-tale ending for the stricken retailer. **Page 31**

7 Britain's services sector has contracted for the first time since January, the S&P Global and the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply final purchasing managers' index confirmed, although the slowdown was not as bad as initially feared. **Page 34**

8 Alan Joyce, the Irish chief executive of Australia's national airline, abruptly ended his 15-year rule over Qantas amid a series of scandals including passengers booked on ghost flights and political anger over his tens of millions in bonuses. **Page 36**

9 The North Sea windfall tax is destroying jobs, reducing domestic oil and gas production and increasing Britain's carbon footprint, Amjad Bseisu, the boss of Enquest has claimed, as his company blamed the tax for driving it to a half-year net loss of $21.2 million, from a $203.5 million net profit last year. **Page 39**

10 MPs have accused the government of leaving the door "wide open" to criminals by failing to police £22.6 billion worth of pandemic business grants. **Page 41**

New lottery boss: changes

Dominic Walsh

National Lottery players who were expecting the new operator to flick a switch on February 1 and start offering spectacular new draws and myriad instant-win games should think again.

The boss of Allwyn International says that though the fourth lottery licence will start on that date, it will be some time before the promised new lottery will be completed.

Robert Chvatal, the Allwyn chief executive, said: "It is something that will happen in the next two years rather than everything magically changing on February 1. We will carry on working on the transformation but that will take another two years."

One element that will definitely change on day one is the amount that goes to good causes. The Allwyn boss said that as the new operator would be charging a smaller management fee than Camelot, they would benefit accordingly.

Allwyn's victory in the bidding for the fourth licence was in many ways a surprise given that Camelot went into the process with the comfort of having run the lottery since it started in 1994. Yet somehow, the Czech-owned upstart managed to pip Camelot at the post, amid cries of foul play by the loser. It was only after the Canadian owner of Camelot withdrew its legal action and sold the business to Allwyn that the outcome was secured.

Chvatal said the legal action and other factors, such as the war in Ukraine and the resultant inflationary crisis, would have made a clean transition on the anointed day difficult.

Asked whether Allwyn could have stepped up without buying Camelot, Chvatal said: "It would have been much harder, and very complex. Buying Camelot made it much easier."

He insisted that the purchase of Camelot and the more measured introduction of the new-look lottery "doesn't mean we back-pedalled from our ambition to grow the UK National Lottery".

He also more-or-less stood by the promise of raising £38 billion for good causes over the ten-year licence, while admitting that the figure might have to be tweaked.

Chvatal said he remained confident that the lottery would grow under Allwyn, but added: "Whether the figure raised will get up to £38 billion, or £40 billion or £35 billion, I don't know."

Allwyn has kept its new strategy for raising turnover close to its chest, although experts are sceptical over the impact of the mooted halving of a Lotto ticket price to £1 to generate sales. Chvatal said that much of the investment planned would go into "uprating some important components" of technology, while replacing 40,000 terminals in retail locations.

Although buying Camelot brought it an experienced workforce, many senior managers left. One of the first things Andria Vidler, the new chief executive of Allwyn UK and a former non-executive director at 888 Holdings, is planning is a new management team.

Allwyn is far from a one-trick pony, however. In addition to its UK operation, it has lottery operations in Austria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Cyprus





Robert Chvatal is the chief executive of Allwyn, the new lottery operator

Ministers blamed for cuts at chip maker

Katie Prescott
Technology Business Editor

Bosses at the UK's biggest semiconductor factory have blamed the government for their plans to cut a hundred jobs, saying it is because of the decision to impose restrictions on its business and order a sale of the company.

Newport Wafer Fab (NWF) in south Wales has launched a consultation into a restructuring plan which would lead to a loss of about a sixth of roles, returning its headcount to when it was subject to a controversial takeover by Nexperia, a Chinese-backed business, in 2021.

Nexperia was told to get rid of the company on national security grounds last year by Grant Shapps, the business minister.

A spokesman for NWF said that as a result "Nexperia has been forced to cancel its investment plans aimed at making the Newport site fit for the future, by introducing new technology and products". He added that the "weakness" in the global semiconductor market that started at the end of last year is an added factor.

"We currently see no other option than to reduce the number of employees in Newport as the increased size of the workforce was dependent upon the terminated investment plans," he said.

NWF makes wafers that are shipped to Asia to be made into semiconductors. The UK's largest semiconductor maker was taken over two years ago by Nexperia, a Dutch subsidiary of Wingtech Technology, the Chinese smartphone maker.

However, the deal was reviewed by the government under new national security legislation, and after months of deliberation it issued an order to unwind the £63 million acquisition.

The government found there was a risk to the cutting-edge cluster of semiconductor companies in south Wales because of Nexperia's ownership, and that there could be a "technology and know-how" risk if sophisticated microchips were to be produced by NWF that could "undermine UK capabilities".

Last September, the company's staff association wrote to The Times saying employees "fully support Nexperia and its ownership of our site" because it had provided improved job security, wages and working conditions.

Nexperia has filed a judicial review to appeal against the government's decision and it is also exploring potential options for a sale of the site, under the supervision of the government.

Vaughan Gething, the Welsh economy minister, called the announcement "extremely worrying". He added: "It is critical that any new owner of the business has the means and intention to invest in the site as soon as possible."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Wilko store closures

still doing everything we can to secure a deal that would protect the majority of jobs and stores. But this will be of little comfort for those not knowing how they'll pay their bills."

The administrators are continuing negotiations over the remainder of the business with Doug Putman, the Canadian businessman who bought HMV out of administration in 2019.

Putman, whose family also owns Toys 'R' Us in Canada, had made an offer for 300 of Wilko's 400 stores, which would secure between 8,000 and 9,000 jobs out of the 12,000 total. However, it is understood Putman is now targeting about 200 sites instead. He is reported to have encountered difficulties during talks with Wilko suppliers.

The Range, another value retailer, has also made an offer to buy Wilko's brand and online operations. Poundland's owner, Pepco, and Home Bargains are still looking at a number of stores.

coming down track

ALEX LIVESEY/RICHARD BAKER/GETTY IMAGES;





The new lottery operator has said it will raise £38 billion for good causes such as sports. Noel Edmonds was the lottery's first TV host in 1994

and Italy. It recently passed on the opportunity to buy the Irish lottery, but was successful with an estimated £200 million bid for Camelot Lottery Solutions, which owned the Illinois state lottery.

The operating model for running the Illinois state lottery is a private management agreement (PMA). The Allwyn boss said: "We want to be the operator of choice for any regulator or government on both sides of the Atlantic. Both sides of the western world are our focus. PMA is the right operating model in the US and logically we will look at other states in the US."

He cited Indiana and New Jersey as further opportunities, albeit Indiana is not scheduled to come up for grabs for four years. "You have to plan long term," Chvatal said. "We were working on the tender document for the UK National Lottery for three years."

On this side of the pond, the Czech boss of Allwyn said he was hopeful of being given a chance of pitching for a Dutch opportunity. "The Dutch made some proclamation in the past that they are looking at privatising the National Lottery. If that happens we will definitely be there, ready to make a proposition," he said.

Chvatal was speaking as Allwyn reported its first quarterly numbers where the company could consolidate the UK and US businesses. He said the consolidated numbers for the past 12 months on a pro-forma basis were "impressive" at about $2 billion per quarter of revenue, prompting suggestions that the group is likely to renew its listing ambitions as soon as markets improve.

Total consolidated revenue in the second quarter jumped by 115 per cent year-on-year to €2.05 billion, mainly due to acquisitions, while excluding those one-offs second-quarter revenue rose by 7 per cent to €1.02 billion.

Underlying earnings increased by 15 per cent to €324.5 million. "The house is in order," Chvatal said.

At 45m to 1, it won't be you

Behind the story

The first ever UK national lottery was in 1568, when Sir William Cecil, adviser to Queen Elizabeth I, hatched a plan to raise funds for the restoration of Britain's crumbling ports. At ten shillings to enter, it was a resounding failure, with the public simply not buying the prospect of paying ten shillings for a 16,000 to one chance of winning the £5,000 jackpot, about £2.2 million in today's money.

No such issues are faced by its modern equivalent, launched to great fanfare on November 19, 1994, as 22 million tuned in to watch Noel Edmonds present its first draw.

John Major's government had decided on the move the previous year, awarding the contract to Camelot, which beat seven other bidders for the prize, including the billionaire entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson.

Branson would continue in his battle for the lottery licence five years later, proposing a non-profit "People's Lottery", a bid he abandoned after the National Lottery Commission (subsumed into the Gambling Commission in 2013) renewed Camelot's licence in December 2000.

The 2007 licence renewal was tame in comparison, with Camelot seeing off the Indian lottery group Sugal & Damani. But a series of controversies, including fines for mobile app failures in 2018 and 2022, and criticism of the amount of money kept by Camelot, saw it lose the licence in March last year in favour of the Czech firm Allwyn.

After Camelot dropped a legal challenge in September, it was acquired by Allwyn in a deal thought to be worth £100 million.

The lottery has become a key source of income for the Treasury and has made £47 billion for thousands of good causes, most prominently Olympic sports. The Elizabethan prudishness on probabilities has clearly not been passed down to the modern lotto player — the chances of winning the jackpot are about 45 million to one.

Ontario fund buys wealth manager

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan has signalled its continued confidence in the UK, snapping up the wealth management group Seven Investment Management for £255 million.

Ontario, one of the world's biggest pension funds with C$250 billion (£145 billion) in investments, is buying a majority stake in the business from Caledonia Investments, the listed investment vehicle of the Cayzer family.

Ontario was concerned by Brexit and privately furious when Camelot, its lottery business, lost the licence to run the National Lottery in the UK last year, feeling that the process run by the regulator, the Gambling Commission, was unfair. But the latest deal suggests the pension scheme is positive about the UK. It comes on top of a decision last year to buy a 25 per cent stake in SSE's electricity transmission network. Caledonia bought Seven in 2015 and will profit on the deal as the business is in the books at £187.1 million. It was Caledonia's single biggest investment.

Seven has grown to assets under management of £21 billion with 9,000 retail investors and 2,000 intermediary clients. It made a pre-tax profit last year of £11 million. Seven was co-founded in 2002 by Justin Urquhart-Stewart, a former Barclays executive who became a familiar commentator on TV screens with his breezy manner and trademark red braces. It is based in London and Edinburgh with about 500 employees.

Dean Proctor, chief executive, said: "We are now well positioned for our next phase of growth, and I am excited about our new partnership with OTPP, who are deeply supportive of the team and the firm's strategy."

Ontario sees Seven as a springboard for more wealth management acquisitions. Iñaki Echave, senior managing director, said: "We are excited to partner with Dean and his team. 7IM is one of the highest-quality, fast-growing financial services platforms in Europe and a perfect example of our strategy to make control investments in our high-conviction sectors. We intend to leverage our sector expertise and flexible capital to accelerate 7IM's growth organically and through M&A."

The transaction is the latest in which UK-owned wealth managers are bought by North Americans. Brewin Dolphin was bought by Royal Bank of Canada last year for £1.6 billion, while Charles Stanley was sold to Raymond James, the US investment group, for £279 million.

Caledonia said it was "the right time" to exit. It is reducing its direct investments in private businesses from 35-45 per cent of its portfolio to 25-35 per cent. The FTSE 250 company's shares closed up 60p, 1.8 per cent at £34.45.

Wasted Covid cash will dog Sunak



BUSINESS COMMENTARY *Robert Lea*

The state we were in should not be forgotten. None of us knew what Covid-19 would bring. Sadly that included our political leaders and senior civil servants.

However disproportionate closing down the economy might now be seen, many believed Boris Johnson did a good job. Irritating as he was, Matt Hancock as health secretary still had shreds of credibility. For reasons of extracurricular conduct, neither of their reputations survived the pandemic. The man at the Treasury who masterminded the furlough schemes and other business support mechanisms, Rishi Sunak, emerged in such esteem that he now runs the country.

However, a report out today from the Commons' public accounts committee (PAC) may yet be his Downing-Street-parties or snog-in-the-office moment.

The PAC states the Treasury is still yet to give an assessment of the efficacy of the £22.6 billion of taxpayers' money it spent; or put another way, how much of it was sprayed about and wasted.

It states further that £1.1 billion is known to have been claimed fraudulently. Yet the Treasury has only reclaimed £21 million of that and is doing nothing to recover the other £1 billion-plus.

On the first point the committee concludes the Treasury did not know what it was doing. On the second point, the Treasury has admitted it does not know how to go about it.

Beyond a process of truth and reconciliation we ought to be assured that ministers and officials might get nearer to getting it right when there is a next time. And at a time of an empty exchequer, shouldn't someone be maximising recoveries from fraudsters?

The response from the Treasury thus far, says the PAC, is simply a shrugging of the shoulders.

Every politician not in government during the Covid-19 crisis will be glad they weren't in the room. The prime minister was. He may want to play on his pandemic record before the upcoming general election. The wasted or missing billions of Covid support should be a reminder of what trust and credibility should look like.

Light touch is soft

Sometimes it is not easy to remember how we got here, especially as none of us is getting any younger.

The current corporate governance regime has as its ancestor the Cadbury Report, the archaeopteryx if you will of the all-flapping, pecking, preening regulatory regime of today.

Cadbury sought to codify a world in which Robert Maxwell and Asil Nadir existed, a time when listed companies were run as fiefdoms by fraudsters. In a great shift in British corporate culture, Cadbury ended an age of laissez-faire assumptions that company directors could be relied on to do the right thing.

The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) is currently going through a process of tickling up the Corporate Governance Code once more.

Some believe an overly strict governance regime is the reason UK companies are listing on markets other than the London Stock Exchange. That reaction against best-in-class standards is false logic.

In a world of arrant greenwashing, the FRC is trying to bring credibility to the non-financial reporting around sustainability.

The Institute of Directors is not alone though in thinking the FRC may be going too far in prescribing how boards should act and report on these issues; that box-ticking is back; that the board's role is in danger of being reduced to that of a "glorified compliance function".

In short, the central tenet of Cadbury's "comply or explain" — a framework for boards to exercise judgement and report accordingly — is at risk of becoming buried.

What anyone looking in on all this really wants to know is why, 25 years after Cadbury, the charlatans around Carillion got away with it for so long under the nose of the FRC, which then took another five years to start bringing people to book. Light touch regulations have many benefits but they must come with powerful oversight and timely, transparent justice. We don't seem to have any of those.

Labour grows up

The Carillion fiasco made the reputation of Rachel Reeves. To say she sliced and diced the dramatis personae of Britain's biggest corporate collapse during a series of business select committee hearings would be to underplay her surgical modus operandi. Her successor in the chair of the all-party committee, Darren Jones, has been no less entertaining in skewering the hapless.

His appointment now as Reeves's deputy on the shadow Treasury front bench indicates a Labour party getting ready for power. There's a long way from being first-rate parliamentarians to becoming excellent ministers but at least and at last it seems the grown-ups are taking charge of the Opposition.

Delivering strikes

Nearly ten years to the week that Royal Mail was sold off, the postal network's regulator Ofcom is to review the future of the universal service. The one-price, goes anywhere, six days a week fundamental service premise has been both a millstone around the neck of corporate efficiency and an elephant in the room no minister has been prepared to tackle.

The universal service in a world of digital communications and rampant parcel delivery competition is an anachronism. Royal Mail executives will see liberation from the outdated. Unions see the inevitability of tens of thousands of job cuts. The delivery of industrial strife will be the price to pay.

robert.lea@thetimes.co.uk
Alistair Osborne is away

Recession fears ease as services slowdown is less than expected

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Britain's services sector has contracted for the first time since January, a closely watched survey confirmed, although the slowdown was not as bad as initially feared.

S&P Global and the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply final purchasing managers' index (PMI) for the services sector slipped to 49.5 in August from 51.5 in July.

Although the reading is below the 50-point mark that separates growth and contraction, it was revised up from an earlier reading of 48.7, also topping analysts' forecasts.

Last month higher interest rates and rising prices squeezed household finances and cooled spending. Stronger unemployment concerns also prompted consumers to exercise greater caution, the survey noted.

Tim Moore, economics director at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said: "Service providers saw customer spending reverse course during August as higher borrowing costs, subdued business confidence and stretched household finances all acted to curtail sales opportunities."

The composite reading, which includes the manufacturing sector, was also bumped up to 48.6 from an initial estimate of 47.9.

After the worse-than-expected flash PMIs were released last month, experts warned the UK was headed for a recession due to the services sector finally succumbing to the economy's slowdown. It was just the second time in nearly three years the services PMI slipped into contraction territory.

However, yesterday economists cast doubt on those assumptions after the upgrades. "This is probably just another occasion when the composite PMI is giving a misleading read on the economy's momentum," said Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics.

He said he expected GDP to grow 0.2 per cent in the three months to September, taking an imminent recession risk off the table.

However, the Bank of England is poised to keep interest rates at their expected peak of between 5.5 per cent and 5.75 per cent for a year, keeping growth subdued.

In new forecasts published last night, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) forecasts GDP will expand just 0.4 per cent this year and 0.3 per cent in 2024.

Inflation is tipped to remain high throughout that period and only return to the Bank's 2 per cent target by the end of 2025.

Over the next two years Britain will "teeter on the edge of a recession", said Vicky Pryce, a senior member of the BCC's economic advisory council.

"But the fact is that with growth predicted to hover so close to zero for three years, it will still feel a lot like one for most people and businesses," she added.

The PMI is the latest set of data to be corrected to show the UK economy is performing better than initially thought. Last week the Office for National Statistics said that it estimated UK GDP was 0.6 per cent larger than its pre-pandemic size at the end of 2021. It previously thought it was 1.2 per cent smaller.

The revision means Germany is the worst-performing economy in the G7 since the start of the pandemic.

A separate survey on eurozone activity was also downgraded yesterday. The composite PMI for the 20-member common currency area dropped to 46.7 in August from 48.6 in July, below the first reading of 47. Germany, France, Spain and Italy, the bloc's economic powerhouses, all signalled contraction.

ALAMY



Prices could end the year 68 per cent higher in Turkey, amid unorthodox monetary policies and the lira's collapse, analysts say

Turkey in a flap over soaring inflation

Average price rises in rich economies rose in July for the first time since autumn, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Mehreen Khan writes).

Annual inflation in July rose from 5.7 per cent to 5.9 per cent in the OECD group of countries, as high price pressures in countries such as Turkey pushed up the average rate in the bloc.

Headline consumer price inflation has been falling in large economies such as the US, UK, and eurozone in the past few months but measures of core inflation, which strip out food and energy, have stayed strong.

Turkey has been a major international outlier, with surging double-digit rates of inflation, combined with unorthodox monetary policy that has led to cuts in interest rates, rather than tightening policies. Inflation has been pushed up by the collapsing value of the Turkish lira.

Annual inflation in Turkey rose to 58.9 per cent last month, the highest since the end of last year and reversing a recent trend of falling prices. Turkish inflation was 47.8 per cent in July, and analysts at JP Morgan have said consumer prices will end the year up 68 per cent, rather than 62 per cent.

When excluding Turkey, annual inflation in the rest of the OECD countries was stable in July. Nearly two thirds of countries in the bloc recorded a fall in prices compared with the same period last year.

Inflation has eased in most countries as the sharp rise in energy prices recorded in 2022 has fallen out of the base price calculation this year. Overall energy-driven inflation in the OECD fell by 7.5 per cent in July. Food price inflation, however, has been slower to come down. It was 9.2 per cent, the same rate as recorded in June and the lowest in 14 months.

In the UK, headline inflation fell to the lowest since before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 at 6.8 per cent. CPI inflation peaked at 11.1 per cent in October but the rate of price growth is still more than three times above the Bank of England's target of 2 per cent. Markets widely expect another interest rate rise from the monetary policy committee this month.

The UK still has the highest rate of annual inflation in the G7 group of countries, even as the July drop was the largest recorded among major economies.

Equivalent price rises were at 3.1 per cent in the US and 5.3 per cent in the eurozone.

China, which is not in the OECD, suffered from outright deflation in July, with prices falling by 0.3 per cent, making it a major outlier among the world's biggest economies.

China may never overtake US economy

Jack Barnett

The world's second-largest economy may never surpass that of the United States, experts have claimed in what would be a reversal of a long-held view that the country would top the global GDP table by the end of the decade.

Bloomberg Economics thinks the Chinese economy may stay behind the US for years due to expansion being constrained by stuttering population growth and scarring caused by Beijing's strict response to the pandemic.

It could take at least another two decades for China's GDP to beat America's and even after that it may fall back behind soon after, the report said.

The development came as another survey indicated the Chinese economic slowdown was setting in. The Caixin/S&P Global services purchasing managers' index (PMI) slipped to 51.8 in August from 54.1 in July, the poorest reading since December when tough zero-Covid measures were in force.

Although the services index is still above the 50-point threshold that separates growth from contraction, it has been edging closer to crossing that mark for several months.

The Caixin PMI measures activity in China's private sector and excludes state-owned enterprises. However, it has converged with the official PMI, which was released last week. Each survey topped market expectations.

Wang Zhe, an economist at Caixin Insight Group, said: "The marginal slowdown in the services sector's supply and demand expansion offset the improvement in manufacturing production and demand."

The composite PMI, which captures both manufacturing and services activity, nudged down to 51.7 from 51.9 in July, the lowest level since January.

Chinese growth is stuttering amid record high youth unemployment and a property slump. Exports are contracting due to western consumers reining in spending in response to higher interest rates and elevated inflation.

Chinese politicians have launched stimulus measures to boost spending, including cutting interest rates and urging lenders to lower mortgage costs. Analysts have said the policies are unlikely to revive China's ailing economy.

There is a risk China misses its 5 per cent annual growth target this year. Investment banks have cut their China GDP growth forecasts for this year.

The days of China's economic growth nearing double digits are numbered, with Bloomberg Economics predicting expansion will slow to 3.5 per cent in 2030 and 1 per cent by 2050.

Such rates mean China would expand at a similar pace to western economies, raising the risk of the global economy cooling markedly.

Beijing has held off from launching a stimulus bonanza over concerns it could fuel unsustainable growth.

Cheap cash in the 2010s fuelled a property boom that led to an oversupply of homes. Some of China's biggest developers are at risk of defaulting on their debts as a result of being unable to sell enough homes.

Property funds in biggest sell-off since mini-budget

Tom Howard

Investors are pulling their money out of property funds at a rate not seen since the chaos of the mini-budget last autumn. A net £121 million was withdrawn from property funds in August, according to data from Calastone, which tracks fund flows.

Property funds have suffered outflows in each of the past 13 months, with August's decline the largest since October last year when the mini-budget unnerved bond markets and sent yields and borrowing costs sharply higher.

The effect of higher bond yields and debt costs has been to depress valuations of commercial properties, which have dropped sharply over the past year. Stubbornly strong economic and inflation data, especially at the start of August, renewed concerns that central banks will have to continue increasing interest rates higher than many had estimated. "Higher yields elsewhere make property relatively less attractive and put pressure on asset valuations," Edward Glyn at Calastone said. "This had investors running for the safety of cash and money market funds."

So far this year investors have pulled £428 million from their property fund holdings. More recent economic data has boosted hopes that interest rates might start to come back down this year after all. However, Glyn said that investors would want to see "clear signs that inflation has been defeated", which would allow interest rates to be cut, before parking their money with property funds again.

"This road is proving a longer one than investors hoped," he added.

The outflows in property funds were part of a wider sell-off of equity funds in August. Calastone's data showed that £1.19 billion was withdrawn last month, the most since September last year.

David Smith



Curious tale of our Covid recovery comes to life in the Blue Book

Long ago, when I was economics correspondent of this newspaper, behind my desk was a big economics library. It wasn't quite the Library of Alexandria, one of the greatest wonders of the world (though accounts vary) but it was quite wonderful. Among books, journals, budget documents, Bank of England bulletins and other publications were dozens of Blue Books. I don't think there was a first edition, published in 1946, but many others were there.

The past is another country and younger readers may need reminding that this was before the internet. The Blue Book, the annual United Kingdom national accounts, was available in printed form only, and seized on with great enthusiasm. Only the Pink Book, for the balance of payments, came close.

I mention it because this year's Blue Book has been creating headlines, even before it is published. On Friday, the Office for National Statistics took everybody by surprise by announcing big revisions to gross domestic product data.

I don't want to go over old ground here. What I wanted to do was reflect on what the new figures tell us about the most extraordinary period most of us have lived through. History is always changing, and the latest revisions, which tell us that GDP recovered to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021, earlier than recently expected, merely take us back to an older version.

If we go back to spring last year, not only was GDP estimated to have risen above pre-pandemic levels (monthly figures then suggested it happened in November 2021) but the economy was estimated to have shrunk by 9.3 per cent in 2020, its biggest annual fall since 1921.

Then along came last year's Blue Book and the revised fall in 2020 to 11 per cent, the biggest since the Great Frost of 1709. The fall in 2020 has now been revised from 11 to 10.4 per cent (still the biggest since the Great Frost), while 2021 has been revised up from 7.8 to 8.7 per cent, the largest annual rise since 1941 (the war effort was good for growth), or in peacetime since 1815. What last year's Blue Book took away, this year's is giving back.

The revisions confirm that the Covid-19 recession and recovery was both dramatic and short-lived. It took two years to get back, compared with an average of three years for most recessions, and five years after the global financial crisis of 2008-9.

When I wrote here during the first lockdown in 2020 that we would see a "V-shaped" recession and recovery, people were sceptical. Some thought we would stay down. Few could see a clear path out.

Many thought lockdowns were the worst prescription for the economy. I know why people were troubled, though it was clear some restrictions were necessary, which some lockdown sceptics never accepted. Lockdowns were the biggest attack on civil liberties most of us have experienced. School closures have plainly had a lasting impact on pupils.

The first lockdown was indiscriminate because the government was unprepared and inexpertly led. Sectors closed that did not need to, as risk-averse businesses shut to put in place safety protocols. It was necessary to close virus-spreading activity, including crowded shops, pubs and indoor entertainment gatherings. It was never clear outdoor sporting events needed to be in empty stadiums, though transport to and from may have been a problem.

A V-shaped recession and recovery was, however, always easy to see. A recession brought about by a combination of lockdowns and public fears would be followed by a sharp rebound as restrictions were eased and fears began to abate.

So it proved. The recession of 2020 was essentially the story of a single quarter. In the second three months of 2020, during the first lockdown, the new figures tell us the economy shrank by a massive 20.3 per cent. There was a smaller 2.7 per cent fall in the first quarter of 2020, because lockdown began in March. That 20.3 per cent fall was more than seven times the previous record quarterly GDP fall, 2.8 per cent during the three-day week in 1974.

After the record fall, the economy bounced back in the third quarter of 2020, by 16.8 per cent, grew through a fourth quarter that included the second lockdown in November of that year and fell only slightly in the first quarter of 2021, the third lockdown. The second-quarter bounce after that was strong, now estimated at 7.3 per cent.

But, while a V-shaped Covid recession and recovery is now restored, the details of it are frankly weird. One recent puzzle has been the failure of retail sales to bounce back after restrictions were lifted in April 2021. Official figures had sales volumes last month down more than 10 per cent on April 2021. Now the Office for National Statistics has discovered that, instead of rising by a mere 1.5 per cent in 2021, retail volumes jumped by 10.8 per cent.

Not only that but the NHS is a big factor in the recovery. This was a recession and recovery determined by a public health event but there was also a health recession and recovery. Healthcare output slumped by 42.5 per cent in 2020 because the pandemic prevented much normal activity taking place. It then bounced back by 57.1 per cent last year.

As for what some would regard as the productive parts of the economy, there was only bad news in the latest changes. Output of the production sector had been thought to have risen by 7.3 per cent in 2021. Now it is reckoned to have fallen by 3.9 per cent. Construction output rose, but by less than previously estimated. Both production and construction were below pre-pandemic levels at the end of 2021, and for production that is almost certainly the case still.

Putting all this together, we have a different economic picture of one of the strangest periods of modern times. It is, if anything, an even weirder picture than we thought.



The recession and recovery from the lockdowns was dramatic

David Smith is Economics Editor of The Sunday Times
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Katie Prescott

Shortage of technology investment is storing up trouble for the future

Dealmaking in the private sector appears to be in the doldrums. The higher cost of capital, coupled with an uncertain economic climate, mean some in the venture capital industry say they have never seen it this bad.

Data out today from Pitchbook, which monitors these things, reveals that the value of VC deals has fallen by almost 60 per cent compared with last year. The number of deals that funds are doing has remained pretty consistent, with activity at its most robust among earlier stage companies, but the money flowing in isn't anywhere near the same levels. "No one," the report concludes, "is immune".

Higher interest rates have several effects. They lead to higher borrowing costs to do deals, the bar for making returns is higher and there are higher discount rates on business valuations. The change from the years of plenty we had been used to is brutal.

> 'We need UK venture capital to be successful and we need new world class, well-funded businesses'

In 2021, VC deal value bounced to £27.7 billion from £13.7 billion in 2020. In 2022 it was still flying high at £29 billion. So far this year it is hovering at £7.9 billion. What is known politely as a "correction" could also be called a bad hangover. In the words of one venture capitalist reading the numbers: "This is worse than I thought."

While the report says it is too early to tell what this all means, as there was a slight pick-up in the second quarter, those making the deals feel they know all too well.

It is not the here and now but the next few years they are worrying about. The most important numbers relate to VC fundraising levels, which have fallen significantly this year. In 2021 £7.4 billion was raised, in 2022 £6.8 billion while so far this year it is £2.5 billion.

Typically, VCs raise money that they will deploy over the next three to five years. The lower amounts raised this year will have a knock-on effect on how much flows into companies. This data suggests that the picture will remain difficult for the foreseeable future.

Businesses typically look to get funding from investors that will cover them for two to three years. If the money is not there, they will spend less on growth. But there is also a danger that they could run out of money.

This is fine when it is a Darwinian purge of poor businesses, far more tragic when perfectly good companies just cannot access the capital that they need.

There are some other issues. The government is exploring unlocking capital from pension funds to invest in growth businesses. The chancellor has raised the possibility of deploying up to £75 billion by the end of the decade.

However, a depressed market such as this one makes it harder for these very risk-averse bodies to invest, faced with a backdrop when valuations are down and companies are making losses, potentially scuppering the plan.

Then there's the problem of realising returns. One of the main exits for investors, namely public listings, is all but closed at the moment. Only two VC-backed listings happened in the first half of this year, and the biggest five exits were all acquisitions.

Companies are waiting for reform of some of the London stock exchange's regulation to make it more attractive to list, rather than onerous and difficult to justify as some argue is currently the case.

Optimistically, "the IPO pipeline appears to be robust", Pitchbook found. Now it needs to start flowing.

This all matters because it tells the story of the financial ecosystem that supports the growth of technology companies mainly held privately in the UK, which still only boasts two officially classed as tech on the FTSE 100: Sage and Autotrader.

There are clearly some exceptions to all this, and companies raising large sums but as one insider put it: "UK venture capital could do without this. We need it to be successful and we need new world class, well-funded businesses."

Katie Prescott is Technology Business Editor of The Times

T AUDIO

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Business

Mounting scandals force early departure for boss of Qantas

Bernard Lagan Sydney

The pugnacious Irish chief executive of Australia's national airline abruptly ended his 15-year rule over Qantas yesterday amid a series of scandals including passengers booked on ghost flights and political anger over his tens of millions in bonuses.

Alan Joyce, 57, the son of a Dublin cleaner, who graduated in maths at Trinity College, rose to become the first gay chief of Australia's largest airline in 2008. He had been due to retire in two months but suddenly resigned on Monday night as the airline was embroiled in a reputational crisis over poor treatment of customers while its profits and his bonuses soared.

Last week the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission brought legal action against Qantas for continuing to sell tickets on thousands of cancelled flights. It could result in fines of A$250 million (£127 million) for the airline.

Qantas shares have sunk more than 12 per cent over the past month as anger has mounted over A$24 million (£12.1 million) in bonuses paid and due to Joyce while he runs Australia's most complained-about company.

In a statement he said he had advised the Qantas board he would bring forward his retirement "to help the company accelerate its renewal", claiming he was leaving it "fundamentally strong" and with a "bright future".

Vanessa Hudson, the chief financial officer and chief executive-designate, will step up to the top job today.

It was a feeble ending for Joyce who, only five months ago, was fêted by corporate heavyweights and political figures including Anthony Albanese, the Australian prime minister, as Qantas celebrated its centenary at a party in a hangar. Last week concern about Joyce continuing in the job snowballed after he fronted a combative parliamentary inquiry, aggressively defending his remuneration and denying the airline's reputation had been damaged.


Anger has grown over bonuses due to Alan Joyce

Yesterday Vas Kolesnikoff, Institutional Shareholder Services head of research, said the board should withhold Joyce's bonus shares until the ACCC concluded its investigation into alleged deceptive and misleading conduct.

"Shareholders are going to cop the fine," he told the Australian Financial Review. "Alan's got the company to this stage. He's accountable for this and the board's accountable for this, for not seeing it, [for] letting it go and, in particular, being inactive on it."

Joyce's time at the helm of Qantas has been characterised by often ruthless decision making. In 2011 he grounded the fleet to counter a strike by pilots, engineers and baggage handlers.

Yesterday Hudson addressed the reputational damage to the airline when she told 23,000 staff in a video message that Qantas needed to "get the balance right" between customers, staff and the business. Richard Goyder, Qantas chairman, said the airline's attitude must and will change. "I think it's a time for humility, and I think you'll see plenty of that as well," he said.


Jet2 is the UK's biggest tour operator and its third biggest airline, with Boeing and Airbus planes

Jet2 avoids turbulence with choice of chairman

Ashtead takes 'significant' hit from Hollywood strikes

Callum Jones
US Business Correspondent

Ashtead Group, the FTSE 100 equipment rental company, said strikes in Hollywood by writers and actors were having a "significant impact" on part of its business.

Its shares closed down 2.89 per cent, or 158p, at £53.10. The group, which trades under the name Sunbelt Rentals in America, cited the strikes as it reiterated guidance for revenue outside Britain. In the UK, it expects rental sales to rise 6-9 per cent this year, down from a previous forecast of 10-13 per cent.

Based in London, the group was founded in 1947 in Ashtead, Surrey. It has a market value of nearly £24 billion, bigger than Tesco and more than twice that of BT, as it capitalises on projects in the US, its biggest market, and recent legislation such as America's $430 billion green energy subsidy package and $52 billion semiconductor manufacturing and research programme.

Revenue rose 19 per cent to $2.7 billion during Ashtead's first quarter, which ended on July 31. Pre-tax profits climbed 11 per cent to $585 million. It said, however, that the strikes were having "significant impact" on its film and television division.

Brendan Horgan, chief executive, said: "Our business has clear momentum with robust end markets in North America, which are supported in the US by the increasing number of mega projects and recent legislative acts."

He added: "Despite UK market conditions softening, we expect overall performance to be in line with our expectations."

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ALAMY

Jet2 has opted for continuity in its choice of chairman to succeed Philip Meeson, appointing its senior independent non-executive director (Dominic Walsh writes).

Robin Terrell, 53, who has been a director at the package travel operator since 2020, has worked across consumer and online retail during his career. After qualifying as a chartered accountant, he worked at Amazon, John Lewis Direct and Tesco.

Analysts at Jefferies said Terrell's background "should provide good scope to ensure continuity and develop the company's customer-led culture" and posed little operational risk.

Meeson, 75, who announced in July that he was stepping down as executive chairman, founded the group 40 years ago. He is assuming the role of adviser and retaining his 18 per cent stake.

Steve Heapy, chief executive, paid tribute to Meeson's "determination and unstinting commitment" to Jet2, which he said had enabled countless UK customers to enjoy "value for money" holidays and created significant employment in the aviation and travel sectors.

Meeson, a former RAF pilot and aerobatics champion, founded the business in 1983 when he acquired Channel Express, an aviation transport business that ferried fresh flowers and produce from the Channel Islands to wholesale markets in the UK.

After expanding its fleet and operations, Meeson floated his interests as Dart Group. Today it is the UK's biggest tour operator, Jet2holidays, and the third biggest airline, Jet2.com, with a large fleet and more planes on order.

Shares of Jet2 closed down 5.8p, or 0.55 per cent, at £10.50.

Rising fleet demand fuels new car sales as retail purchases fall

Alex Ralph

The new car market has entered a second year of growth after a strong rise in sales last month but retail demand has softened.

New vehicle registrations surged 24.4 per cent in August to 85,657, the 13th consecutive month of growth, according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

However, the market still remains 7.5 per cent below pre-pandemic levels and Ian Plummer, commercial director at Auto Trader, the online automotive marketplace, said there was a "clear divide in the market", with the growth "almost exclusively fuelled by strongly rising fleet sales, while the proportion of retail sales is softening, underlining the pressure on consumers".

August is also typically a quieter month with many buyers probably opting to wait until the new "73" number plates arrive this month.

Last month registrations by large fleets rose 58.4 per cent, to 51,951 units, year on year and business registrations 39.4 per cent to 1,635 units, while private demand softened by 8.1 per cent to 32,071.

Plummer said that "after years of heavily constrained new car supply struggling to keep pace with consumer appetite, for the first time since the pandemic we're seeing production exceed demand, which is shown by the flattening retail sales numbers".

Demand for electric vehicles continued to grow, accounting for almost four in ten new cars reaching the road. Battery electric vehicle uptake jumped by 72.3 per cent to take a 20.1 per cent market share, an August record and the highest since last December.

"The significant uptick in electric registrations is promising, but again, it continues to be propped up by fleet channels, as people take advantage of business-related tax benefits to buy," Plummer added. "Without those advantages, the current £50,000 median price tag for a brand-new electric car is far beyond most retail car buyers' budgets."

The SMMT also warned that with fewer than four months to go until the expected arrival of a zero-emission vehicle mandate, industry still had "no sight" of the proposed regulation.

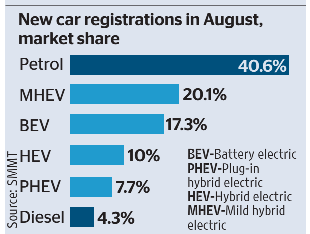
The mandate will require manufacturers to sell a certain proportion of zero-emission vehicles, with the proposed levels for new cars at 22 per cent by 2024, 80 per cent by 2030 and 100 per cent by 2035.

Mike Hawes, chief executive of the SMMT, said: "Businesses cannot plan on the basis of consultations, they need certainty. And now, more than ever, government must match action to ambition, ensuring there are the incentives and infrastructure in place to convince drivers to make the switch."

The top three bestsellers last month were the Ford Puma, Tesla Model Y and Vauxhall Corsa, selling 2,336, 2,313 and 1,941 units respectively.

Mark Oakley, director of AA Cars, said the expansion of London's ultra-low emission zone last month "pushed more drivers toward eco-friendly cars to dodge added fees. Whether this spurs more EV purchases is to be seen, but so far sales are considerably higher compared to last year."

On the move



Canadians to drive away with Lookers for £504m

Robert Miller

Another British company was set to fall into foreign ownership last night after a large majority of shareholders in Lookers voted in favour of a £504 million bid from a Canadian car dealership.

Lookers said 91 per cent of investors in the London-listed car dealer had approved a cash bid from Global Auto, the bidding vehicle of Alpha Auto Group Holdings, a Toronto-based operator of car dealerships across North America.

The approved offer is worth 130p per Lookers share in cash after a previous bid of 120p was rejected. The stock closed up 0.20p, or 0.2 per cent, at 128.80p, valuing the company at £492 million.

Investors including Artemis Investment Management, JO Hambro Capital, Schroders and Constellation, the British-based company that also owns We Buy Any Car, had already backed the deal.

The Lookers bid follows the recent £4.5 billion acquisition of Dechra Pharmaceuticals, the FTSE 100 group, by EQT, the Swedish private equity firm, and last week's £203 million offer for Instem, an Aim-listed life sciences software company, from Archimed, a French private equity player.

Lookers was founded as a single bicycle shop in Manchester in 1910 and has grown to become one of the largest car dealerships in Britain, with 144 outlets and 6,500 staff.

Recently, however, it has had a spate of regulatory run-ins. During the pandemic it identified "potentially fraudulent transactions" in its accounts and revealed that it had overstated its profits by £25.5 million. The group was then investigated by the Financial Conduct Authority over its sales culture. The regulator ultimately dropped its inquiry without issuing a sanction, but said it had made its concerns clear to executives.

Alpha is a Canadian network of car dealerships founded by Kuldeep Billan in 2014. Mark Raban, 56, Lookers' chief executive, previously said the takeover reflected the group's "transformational progress" since the pandemic. Last month Lookers reported a dip in half-year pre-tax profit to £40.4 million from £49.9 million in the same period last year, after 2022 results were re-stated.

Lawyers accused of destroying evidence

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Two international law firms are alleged to have spent more than $100,000 on destroying evidence in long-running court rows in London and the US.

Dechert and Sidley Austin, which both have offices in the City, have been accused in American court proceedings of having commissioned outside specialists to delete swathes of emails that should have been disclosed during litigation.

The case involves a claim by Farhad Azima, an Iranian-American aviation entrepreneur, who has alleged that his emails were hacked as part of a smear campaign conducted by senior officials at a Gulf investment authority.

In litigation that has been running in the US and the UK for several years, lawyers for Azima have told hearings at the High Court in London that the state investment authority in Ras al Khaimah hacked his emails and published them on the dark web. The authority has said the claim is "baseless".

The latest allegations came to light at a hearing in related litigation at the end of last month at the federal court in North Carolina.

Lawyers for Azima claimed that Dechert and Sidley Austin, in their capacity acting for the investment authority, instructed outside technicians to delete 27 terabytes of data related to the emirate, which is part of the UAE.

Documents submitted to the US court, seen by The Times, included bills from a technology "investigative" company based in New Hampshire. Among them was an invoice in 2020 for more than $82,000 (£65,000) to Sidley Austin for "secure deletion of RAK dataserver, RAK fileserver, RAK case file … and all data backups".

Another invoice submitted to the court proceedings allegedly showed that Dechert had been billed the previous year for $12,000 by the same company. The technicians said that they would "delete email correspondences containing attachments relating to RAK" and "shred and destroy all hard copies of RAK related data".

In written submissions to the federal court, lawyers for Azima accused Dechert of having been particularly obstructive during the proceedings.

Last year, executives at the RAK investment agency told the High Court in London that they would no longer contest allegations of computer hacking after one of the partners at the City office of Dechert was found to have been negligent in separate litigation.

In that separate fraud case, a judge described the former Dechert partner Neil Gerrard as "a dishonest witness who engaged in serious wrongdoing and ethical violations".

Gerrard had been a senior adviser to the RAK investment authority.

Dechert and Sidley Austin did not comment.



What inspires loyalty?

Good customer service is important. But with the ongoing cost of living crisis and the threat of recession testing brand loyalty, it's absolutely vital to provide a top-tier customer experience

It's received wisdom that it's cheaper to retain a loyal customer than it is to attract a new one. And studies show that loyal customers spend more on products and services than new ones. But with less money to spend, many are starting to rethink their purchasing habits.

A survey by ServiceNow and Opinium Research, which polled 13,000 consumers, found three quarters (76 per cent) say they're less loyal to brands today compared with two years ago. Nearly half (42 per cent) are looking for cheaper options, while one in five (20 per cent) point to greater competition in the market.

A race to the bottom in terms of price is not always a feasible – or desirable – way to do business. But it is possible to improve customer satisfaction and boost loyalty in other ways. Customers want a positive, consistent and seamless experience. They want businesses to understand their needs, to be proactive, and to resolve problems swiftly if they arise. At the heart of that experience lies the employee.

A 360-DEGREE VIEW

Companies that excel at experience don't think of customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX) as separate. It's an approach that recognises that enhancing one of these areas boosts the other. When employees are happier, more loyal and more productive, customers benefit too. That doesn't just apply to the customer service team. Every direct customer interaction is underpinned by decisions taken by countless employees from every department. Their experience also matters.

Past research has shown that companies with excellent CX have employees that are one and a half times more engaged than employees at companies with less satisfactory CX. This drives more positive results in terms of the bottom line. A previous ServiceNow and ThoughtLab survey found 60 per cent of organisations have increased revenue as a result of more tightly aligning CX and EX.

> 'There is no customer experience without a strong employee experience'

"There is no customer experience without a strong employee experience," says Jessica Constantinidis, field innovation officer at ServiceNow. "Organisations seeking to drive loyalty on the customer end should look to their internal operations and ask themselves: 'How can we make life easier for our staff?'"

At Siemens, there are 6,500 IT people that support 377,000 employees across 200 countries. Previously, it was a complex operation with multiple providers, silos, and different tools for each country and business unit. A lack of transparency and reliance on manual processes meant the launch of new services was often delayed. After moving to a single service integration platform with ServiceNow, the company was able to cut costs, automate 98 per cent of IT operation transactions, onboard and transfer employees in just two days, and greatly reduce the time to market.

THE RIGHT TECH AT THE RIGHT TIME

According to a recent Gallup poll, less than 40 per cent of employees feel they have the tools they need to do their job well. Similarly, one in seven workers in ServiceNow's survey identified optimal technology hardware and good technical support as critical for a good EX.

The right technology can help businesses achieve the ideal total experience by empowering employees to make more informed business decisions, collaborate better with team members, and drive a seamless workflow. Automation can speed up customer response times and limit time spent on administrative tasks. Personalisation is made possible by machine learning that can make tailored recommendations based on buying behaviours and key dates such as birthdays or anniversaries, and send out reminders about product maintenance. That needs to come with good levels of security and privacy compliance so customers can trust their data is safe.

Swarovski had the opportunity to create a more personalised CX after the pandemic forced the closure of many of its retail stores. ServiceNow technology allowed the company to be more efficient when managing customer requests by providing a single view of the CX. But there have been other benefits too, says Isabella Kosch, head of Swarovski's GBS service management arm. "We work very closely together towards one common goal – what is the desired end consumer experience? We get so many insights from this tool. We learn about customer behaviour, find more efficiencies and have a continuous improvement system, which resonates with our advisers."

Successfully executing this type of strategy requires a two-pronged approach. Constantinidis says: "Getting insight relies on both a platform approach and your ability to tap into the empathy of the people working with your customers day to day. They're the ones who truly understand what the average customer wants from your organisation. And tools like generative AI will allow us to go beyond normal customer experiences to help brands compete beyond pricing. Crucially, it's all about how deeply you understand who you are serving."

How to stay one step ahead

This is what customers rate 'important' or 'very important' when it comes to customer service, according to 2,000 UK adults surveyed by ServiceNow

GOOD LEVELS OF SECURITY FOR PERSONAL DATA
94%

AGENTS ABLE TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS EASILY
95%

CUSTOMER SERVICE RESPONSE TIMES
92%

CHOICE OF ENGAGEMENT METHODS
89%

COMPANY TREATS ITS EMPLOYEES WELL
87%

servicenow
The intelligent platform for digital transformation
servicenow.co.uk/YES

Enquest boss blames profit levy for $21m half-year loss

Emily Gosden Energy Editor

The North Sea windfall tax is destroying jobs, reducing domestic oil and gas production and increasing Britain's carbon footprint, the boss of Enquest has claimed.

Amjad Bseisu, a prominent Conservative Party donor, attacked the energy profits levy (EPL) as his company blamed the tax for driving it to a half-year net loss of $21.2 million, down from a $203.5 million net profit in the same period last year.

Shares in Enquest closed down 12 per cent, or 2¼p, to 15½p yesterday as analysts at Jefferies said that the results were weaker than expected.

The government imposed the levy in May last year after oil and gas prices surged following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It initially increased the effective tax rate in the North Sea from 40 to 65 per cent and was increased from the start of this year to take the effective rate to 75 per cent.

Although the government included investment allowances alongside the tax and has this year introduced a price floor on the levy, many in the industry have complained that it is having negative consequences. Bseisu said the impact of the tax on Britain was that "we're reducing our production, we're reducing our jobs and we're increasing our carbon footprint".

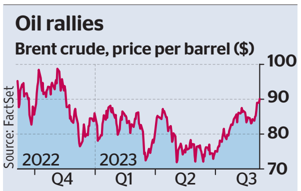
"The industry is investing less, and we are investing less, because we would have looked at more developments without the EPL impact," Bseisu told The Times. "The reduction in production in the UK is actually adding to the carbon footprint of the UK. The UK is now importing oil, which is three times the carbon footprint [of domestic production], and gas, which is up to four times the carbon footprint, from LNG."

He said the levy was also "destroying the jobs that we have" in the industry, roles he argued would otherwise provide the expertise to support cleaner energy in future. Bseisu said that Britain had "lost competitiveness due to the adverse change in fiscal regime" and warned that it had seen "capital abandon the UK" in favour of America, Africa and Asia.

Asked whether Labour's threats to curb North Sea developments were a concern, Bseisu said he would have to wait and assess their policies if elected. "Talking when you're in opposition is different from when you're in government and trying to create jobs," he said.

Enquest, listed in London, is primarily focused on the North Sea but also has some production in Malaysia. In the first half of the year revenues fell by 22 per cent because of lower production and prices, and pre-tax profits fell to $112.9 million, from $182.6 million.

Enquest said its net loss was "driven by the impact of the UK energy profits levy" including a $45.5 million non-cash deferred tax charge and about $76 million it expects to pay in respect of its first-half earnings. A Treasury spokesman said its energy security investment mechanism — the new price floor on the windfall tax — would "give investors the confidence to keep investing in domestic oil and gas production".





ENQUEST

The bulk of Enquest's oil and gas production is in the North Sea although it also has some production in Malaysia

Motorists set to suffer as Saudis and Russia push oil price up

Oil prices have surpassed $90 a barrel for the first time this year after Saudi Arabia and Russia extended production cuts.

Brent crude, the global benchmark price, jumped by about 2 per cent yesterday after the aggressive move by two of the world's biggest oil producers to extend voluntary curbs until December. The decision threatens to put more upward pressure on fuel prices for motorists and is likely to inflame tensions with the US.

Saudi Arabia and Russia are collectively withholding 1.3 million barrels per day of oil from the market, or more than 1 per cent of global demand, in addition to agreements by Opec+, of which they are leading members.

A statement said the decision would "be reviewed monthly to consider deepening the cut or increasing production" and was aimed at supporting "the stability and balance of oil markets".

North Sea has up to 14 new fields in the pipeline

Emily Gosden

Up to 14 new oil and gas fields could get the go ahead in the North Sea next year, the most in a decade, according to a consultancy.

Rystad Energy estimated that if all the potential projects on the cards for 2024 were to get the green light, including the controversial Rosebank and Cambo fields, then it would deliver almost £10 billion of investment in coming years.

"Next year could see the highest number of projects sanctioned in a decade. While three to five projects are sanctioned, on average, in the UK each year, 2024 could see up to 14 new oil and gas fields given the green light," Rystad said.

Sonya Boodoo, senior analyst upstream at Rystad Energy, said the figures reflected "a large pipeline of projects that are considered ready to be sanctioned and have been delayed for one reason or another over the last couple of years" — reasons such as sales processes not completing in time, or awaiting regulatory approval.

The potential for an uptick in new fields comes despite persistent warnings from the industry over negative impacts of the windfall tax, the energy profits levy (EPL).

Boodoo said the investment allowance included alongside the EPL could encourage near-term investments. "Projects which are developed and have the bulk of their expenditure in the period in which EPL is valid may stand to benefit significantly from the investment allowance related to the EPL. Therefore, we could see an uptick in sanctioning of some smaller short-lead time developments, for instance fields that can tie back quickly to existing infrastructure," she said.

Separately, a report from Offshore Energies UK, the North Sea oil and gas industry body, published today, estimates that the sector is ready to make capital investment of up to £35 billion in oil and gas over the next ten years, split evenly between existing and new fields.

It issued a renewed plea for "concerted policy support, a stable and globally competitive tax regime and improved planning and regulatory timelines" to help deliver the potential North Sea investment as well as up to £20 billion spending on carbon capture and storage and hydrogen clusters, and up to £80 billion of offshore wind investment. Oil and gas companies are also involved in offshore wind projects.

KKR all aboard with bus battery maker

Max Kendix

A key British battery storage company is set to secure a $750 million investment from a US private equity group.

KKR will take a 45 per cent stake in Zenobe, in a deal valuing the company at about $900 million, according to sources familiar with the situation.

Zenobe, which is chaired by Steve Holliday, the former chief executive of National Grid, specialises in battery storage and electric vehicles.

The company claims to power a quarter of the electric bus market in the UK, counting Arriva, Stagecoach, and National Express among its clients.

With contracts in Australia, New Zealand, Benelux and North America, the company had 145 employees at the end of 2022. In the last calendar year Zenobe had a turnover of £33 million, more than double the previous year. It made a post-tax loss of £19.2 million in 2022, compared with £5.9 million in 2021. More than 95 per cent of turnover came from the UK.

Founded in 2017, it aims to have 3,000 e-buses in operation and a gigawatt of battery power delivering grid services by 2025. Smaller shareholders in Zenobe, named after the Belgian electrical engineer Zenove Gramme, include Tepco, the Japanese utility company, and Jera, one of Tepco's joint ventures.

In February this year, the company said it had launched Europe's largest battery project directly connected to the transmission grid, with a battery storage system in Capenhurst, Chester. It also announced a separate battery energy storage project in Blackhillock, Scotland, set to go live next year.

Battery storage facilities can alleviate some of the variation in output experienced by wind and solar energy, which reduces the dependence on energy derived from fossil fuels to fill capacity during periods of waning supply.

The investment from KKR was first reported by Sky News. KKR, the private equity and investment banking giant, has more than $500 billion in assets under management. Shares in the New York-based company closed down 0.4 per cent at $61.98 in New York last night, valuing it at $69 billion.

M&G sees clear benefits in backing augmented reality

Emma Powell

The FTSE 100 asset management group M&G has taken a stake in a British company developing augmented reality technology aimed at improving driving safety.

M&G Investments has invested $40 million in Envisics, making it the third largest shareholder in the Milton Keynes-based company. It places a $500 million value on the technology company, double its valuation at the last funding round in 2020.

Envisics's "augmented reality head-up displays" technology interacts with what is on the road ahead and projects information on the windscreen through a series of holographic images. It can alert drivers to pedestrians, cyclists and other cars on the road.

The series C funding round was led by Hyundai Mobis, the South Korean car parts company. M&G will take a seat on Envisics's board. Jeremy Punnett, a portfolio director at M&G, said: "We believe this company can be a genuine leader in this space."

Dr Jamieson Christmas, founder and CEO, said: "Envisics continues to attract extremely high-quality strategic investors to the company."

Business

The Times unit trust information service

ALLIANZ GLOBAL INVESTORS
Inv Serv: 020 7065 1400 Helpline: 0800 317 573

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Gilt Yield A ‡@	206.01	...	+0.27	1.05
Strategic Bond Fund ‡@	136.87	...	-0.28	...
UK Corp Bond C ‡@	104.79	...	-0.78	3.87
UK Eqty C ‡@	6317.26	...	-14.91	...
UK Eqty Inc A ‡@	299.16	...	-1.49	4.75
UK Gwth A ‡@	7629.23	...	-39.73	...
UK Index A Inc ‡@	1423.81	...	-5.83	...
UK Mid Cap A ‡@	4654.61	...	-11.35	...

ARTEMIS FUND MGRS LTD
0800 092 2051
Authorised Inv Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Capital R Acc ‡@	2127.20	...	-12.64	...
Euro Opps R Acc ‡@	91.26	...	-0.48	1.29
Euro Opps R Inc ‡@	85.36	...	-0.46	1.30
European Growth R Acc ‡@	419.74	...	-2.34	1.77
Global Energy R Acc ‡@	39.04	...	-0.07	...
Global Growth R Acc ‡@	344.48	...	+2.14	...
Global Income R Acc ‡@	160.32	...	+0.28	...
Global Income R Inc ‡@	98.57	...	+0.16	...
Global Select R Acc ‡@	153.31	...	+1.06	...
High Income R Inc ‡@	61.24	...	-0.18	6.46
Income R Acc ‡@	503.36	...	-3.03	3.97
Income R Inc ‡@	216.07	...	-1.31	4.09
Monthly Dist R Inc ‡@	62.77	...	-0.16	5.05
Strategic Assets R Acc ‡@	89.58	...	-0.09	...
Strategic Bond R M Acc ‡@	94.53	...	-0.49	3.97
Strategic Bond R M Inc ‡@	48.63	...	-0.25	4.07
Strategic Bond R Q Acc ‡@	94.36	...	-0.49	4.07
Strategic Bond R Q Inc ‡@	48.38	...	-0.26	4.15
UK Growth R Acc ‡@	733.26	...	-2.12	2.13
UK Smaller Cos R Acc ‡@	1769.15	...	-4.81	1.54
UK Special Sits R Acc ‡@	702.52	...	-4.14	...

AXA FRAMLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD
Dling: 0845 602 1952 Priv Clients: 0845 777 5511

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Equity Inc ‡@	572.40	...	-2.70	4.43
Gilt Acc @	201.30	211.80	+0.10	1.08
Gilt Inc @	74.35	78.24	-0.39	1.09
Health Acc ‡@	3026.00	...	+15.00	...
Jap Smlr Co Ac @	62.56	66.09	-0.19	0.30
Managed Inc ‡@	138.30	...	...	4.20
Monthly Inc Inc ‡@	201.50	...	-0.50	...
UK Growth Inc ‡@	207.40	...	-1.60	...
UK Select Opps Inc ‡@	1804.00	...	-15.00	...
UK Sml Cos Inc ‡@	250.50	...	-0.50	...

AXA FUND MANAGERS LTD
Admin & Enq 0117 989 0808
AXA Trusts

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Gen Acc ‡@	2101.00	...	+6.00	...
Gen Inc ‡@	1079.00	...	-2.00	...

UK/Global Investment Companies

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Euro Acc A ‡@	234.70	...	...	1.18
Extra Inc Inc B ‡@	86.74	...	+0.24	1.16
Global Gwth Acc R ‡@	288.10	...	+4.10	0.52
Japan Acc A ‡@	162.30	...	+2.20	1.51
Pac Gwth Acc A ‡@	479.80	...	-17.60	2.30

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD
08457 46 46 46

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
European Gwth ‡@	208.10	...	-1.80	1.69
Sus Leaders ‡@	771.60	...	-4.40	...
UK Growth ‡@	606.90	...	-3.70	...
UK Income ‡@	198.60	...	-0.70	5.04

CLOSE FUND MANAGEMENT LTD
0870 606 6402

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Beacon Inv ‡	84.88	...	+0.35	...

Dealing: 020 7426 6232

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Winchester ‡	3663.53	...	+40.81	0.99

EDENTREE INV MGMT LTD
0800 358 3010

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Resp & Sust Sterling Bond ‡	82.14	...	-0.22	4.33
Resp & Sust Eurp Eq ‡	324.60	...	-2.30	2.06
Resp & Sust Glbl Eq ‡	338.60	...	+0.20	...
Resp & Sust Mgd Income ‡	115.90	...	-0.50	5.13
Resp & Sust UK Eq ‡	213.70	...	-1.00	...
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps ‡	268.50	...	-1.90	...

F & C FUND MANAGEMENT LTD (OEICS)
Enqs: 0870 601 6183 Dealing: 0870 601 6083
Share Class 1 - Retail

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Corporate Bd ‡@	49.99	...	-0.31	1.57
Emerging Mkts ‡@	116.50	...	-0.50	...
Euro Gwth & Inc 1 ‡@	1248.00	...	-10.00	0.09
Extra Inc Bond ‡@	43.64	...	-0.05	1.78
FTSE All-Shr Track ‡@	417.50	...	-2.00	...
Global Gwth SC1 ‡@	306.40	...	+0.30	...
High Inc Trst @	11.10	11.70	+0.01	5.41
Max Inc Bond ‡@	43.11	...	-0.01	3.90
Multi Man Caut ‡@	70.41	...	...	3.18
Multi Man Distr ‡@	60.44	...	...	3.37
North Amer ‡@	892.80	...	+5.50	...
Pacific Gwth ‡@	467.70	...	-1.90	0.04
Strategic Bd ‡@	193.30	...	-0.30	1.33
UK Equity ‡@	3446.00	...	+2.00	...
UK Gwth & Inc Acc 1 ‡@	658.50	...	...	...
UK Gwth & Inc Dist ‡@	234.70	...	...	...
UK Smaller Cos ‡@	968.70	...	-5.40	0.20

FIDELITY INTERNATIONAL
Private Clnts 0800 414161 Broker Dlgs 0800 414181

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Amer Spec Sits ‡@	2312.00	...	+14.00	...
American ‡@	5676.00	...	+35.00	...
Euro Opps ‡@	568.80	...	-6.40	0.32
European ‡@	3499.00	...	-18.00	0.83
Extra Income ‡@	21.75	...	-0.05	6.06
Glob Spec Sits ‡@	5665.00	...	+12.00	...
Global Focus ‡@	2950.00	...	...	...
International ‡@	149.50	...	+0.20	0.08
Japan ‡@	598.60	...	+0.80	0.74
Moneybldr Bal ‡@	41.32	...	-0.22	4.16
Moneybldr Glob	327.60	327.60	-0.10	0.21
Moneybldr Gwth ‡@	76.12	...	-0.95	...
Moneybldr Inc ‡@	27.96	...	-0.11	4.99
Moneybldr UK Ind ‡@	128.47	...	-0.58	...
Special Sits ‡@	4434.00	...	-27.00	...
Wealthbuilder	69.75	72.18	+0.53	...

HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD
01296 386 386
Authorised Inv Funds
Share Class `C

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Corporate Bond ‡@	31.54	...	-0.11	3.51
Ethical ‡@	115.00	...	+0.40	0.20
European ‡@	112.60	...	-0.80	1.94
Far Eastern ‡	112.00	...	-0.40	3.42
Fund of Inv Tst ‡@	135.90	...	-0.80	0.60
Intl Gwth ‡	132.70	...	+0.50	1.38
Japanese ‡	75.67	...	+0.11	1.41
North Amer ‡	161.80	...	+1.00	0.35
Smaller Cos ‡@	101.30	...	-0.50	1.62
Special Sits ‡@	48.72	...	-0.81	...
UK Equity Inc ‡@	90.20	...	-0.49	3.99
UK FTSE 100 IT ‡@	70.01	...	-0.34	...
UK FTSE All-S IT ‡@	78.61	...	-0.38	...
UK Growth ‡@	82.14	...	-0.44	...

HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD
Enq: 0845 745 6123 Dlg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 8-6
HSBC Index Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Amer Ind Acc ‡@	993.88	...	+5.23	1.24
Amer Ind Inc ‡@	787.72	...	+4.14	2.45
Euro Ind Acc ‡@	1213.48	...	+5.40	2.63
Euro Ind Inc ‡@	755.89	...	+3.36	2.70
FTSE 100 Ind Acc ‡@	278.52	...	-1.01	...
FTSE 100 Ind Inc ‡@	124.38	...	-0.45	...
FTSE 250 Ind Acc ‡@	283.40	...	-0.12	3.62
FTSE 250 Ind Inc ‡@	168.75	...	-0.07	3.07
FTSE All-S Acc ‡@	706.70	...	+0.96	...
FTSE All-S Inc ‡@	351.13	...	+0.48	...
Jap Ind Acc ‡@	150.55	...	+1.57	1.88
Jap Ind Inc ‡@	115.08	...	+1.19	1.92
Pac Ind Acc ‡@	497.82	...	+6.40	3.48
Pac Ind Inc ‡@	302.35	...	+3.89	3.61

HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Balanced Acc ‡@	245.20	...	+0.57	1.19
Balanced Inc ‡@	151.95	...	-0.14	...
Corp Bd Acc ‡@	262.64	...	-1.87	5.12
Corp Bd Inc ‡@	100.03	...	-0.71	3.56
Gilt & Fd Int Acc ‡@	497.78	...	+1.62	...
Gilt & Fd Int Inc ‡@	74.17	...	+0.24	...
Income Acc ‡@	708.74	...	+0.19	4.20
Income Inc ‡@	284.11	...	+0.08	4.34
Monthly Inc Acc ‡@	313.41	...	+0.77	3.21
Monthly Inc Inc ‡@	125.14	...	-0.06	4.09
UK Grth & Inc Ret B Acc ‡@	144.63	...	+0.08	...
UK Grth & Inc Ret B Inc ‡@	62.44	...	+0.03	...
UK Gth & Inc Acc ‡@	144.63	...	+0.08	...
UK Gth & Inc Inc ‡@	62.44	...	+0.03	...

HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
American Index Retail Acc ‡@	993.88	...	+5.23	1.24
American Index Retail Inc ‡@	787.72	...	+4.14	2.45
Asian Gth Acc ‡@	147.77	...	-0.07	...
Asian Gth Inc ‡@	130.99	...	-0.06	...
Chinese Eq Acc ‡@	513.81	...	+0.27	0.40
Chinese Eq Inc ‡@	434.76	...	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth Acc ‡@	973.97	...	+4.05	0.41
Euro Gth Inc ‡@	817.05	...	+3.39	0.44

IGNIS ASSET MGMT
Dlg: 0141 222 8282

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
American Gth Inc @	322.55	340.42	-3.34	...
Balanced Growth @	262.17	276.69	-0.93	...
Balanced Growth Acc @	393.13	414.92	-1.40	...
Corporate Bond ‡@	99.69	...	-0.89	4.77
European Growth @	403.88	426.26	-3.57	...
European Growth Acc @	475.71	502.07	-4.21	...
Glob Gwth @	331.53	349.90	-3.09	0.12
Higher Yield @	83.98	88.64	-0.29	4.43
Higher Yield Acc @	275.04	290.28	-0.92	...
Japan @	49.06	51.78	-0.03	...
Managed @	130.89	138.15	-0.06	0.66
Managed Trust @	71.96	76.96	+0.17	...
Mngd Pfolio Inc @	95.54	100.84	-0.11	...
Pacific Grth @	498.71	526.34	-2.81	1.34
Smaller Comp @	756.24	798.14	+1.64	...
Smaller Cos @	628.94	663.79	+1.36	...

INSIGHT INVESTMENT FDS MANAGEMENT LTD
Client Servs: 0207 163 4000
Insight Investment Multi-Manager Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Well Bldr Bal Acc ‡@	96.05	...	-0.32	...
Well Bldr Gwth Acc ‡@	93.79	...	-0.36	...

INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD
Dling: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677
Brkr Serv: 0800 028 2121
INVESCO Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Str Inc N/Trl ‡@	323.57	...	-0.12	...

INVESCO PERPETUAL Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Childrens Acc ‡@	457.22	...	-3.45	2.32
Corp Bond Acc ‡@	195.52	...	-0.74	3.23
High Income Inc ‡@	308.42	...	-1.20	4.06
Income & Grth Inc ‡@	405.14	...	-2.40	3.32
Income Inc ‡@	1226.13	...	-5.05	3.60
Money Acc ‡@	94.36	...	+0.01	...
Monthly Inc Plus Inc ‡@	89.42	...	-0.16	6.27
UK Aggressive Inc ‡@	154.28	...	-0.24	...
UK Growth Acc ‡@	899.03	...	-2.38	...
UK Sml Cos Eqty Acc ‡@	1266.46	...	-10.05	...
UK Sml Cos Gwth ‡@	82.54	...	+0.04	...

INVESTEC FUND MGRS
Broker Support and Dealing: 020 7597 1900
OEIC Series i,ii,iii, & iv

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
American A Acc ‡@	752.31	...	+4.18	...
Asia ex Japan A Acc ‡@	706.34	...	-4.02	...
Capital Accumulator A Acc ‡@	231.48	...	-3.81	...
Cautious Managed A Acc ‡@	371.65	...	-0.55	1.91
Cautious Managed A Inc ‡@	231.30	...	-0.34	1.93
Diversified Growth A Acc ‡@	123.33	...	-0.68	0.51
Diversified Growth A Inc ‡@	129.95	...	-0.72	0.01
Diversified Income A Acc ‡@	320.67	...	-0.51	2.89
Diversified Income A Inc ‡@	66.60	...	-0.11	4.32
Emerging Mkts Blended Debt A Acc ‡@	113.98	...	-0.06	...
Emerging Mkts Blended Debt A Acc Gross ‡@	125.82	...	+0.20	...
Emerging Mkts Blended Debt A Inc ‡@	63.16	...	-0.03	...
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc ‡@	146.44	...	-0.39	...
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt A Acc ‡@	185.18	...	-0.07	5.12
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt A Inc ‡@	69.22	...	-0.03	7.00
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt Gross I Acc ‡@	220.49	...	-0.05	5.42
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc ‡@	134.24	...	-1.25	...
Global Bond A Acc ‡@	139.30	...	+4.03	0.82
Global Bond A Inc ‡@	109.33	...	+3.00	0.82
Global Bond I Gross Inc ‡@	1167.00	...	+29.78	1.25
Global Dynamic A Acc ‡@	193.61	...	+1.95	0.47
Global Energy A Acc ‡@	170.97	...	-1.14	...
Global Equity A Acc ‡@	236.26	...	+0.53	0.13
Global Franchise A Acc ‡@	319.65	...	+0.83	...
Global Free Enterprise A Acc ‡@	1301.51	...	+1.94	...
Global Gold A Acc ‡@	179.73	...	-1.20	0.92
Global Special Situations A Acc ‡@	342.68	...	+0.23	...
Global Special Situations A Inc ‡@	264.54	...	+0.18	0.21
Managed Growth A Acc ‡@	265.37	...	-1.83	...
Monthly High Income A Acc ‡@	243.45	...	+0.43	3.54
Monthly High Income A Inc ‡@	63.17	...	+0.01	5.01
Multi-Asset Protector A Acc ‡@	167.06	...	-0.07	0.92
Strategic Bond A Acc ‡@	244.54	...	+0.19	1.96
Strategic Bond A Inc ‡@	119.47	...	+0.09	3.32
Target Return A Acc ‡@	102.03	...	+0.44	0.82
Target Return A Inc ‡@	87.63	...	+0.01	0.87
UK Alpha A Acc ‡@	2640.72	...	-8.93	...
UK Blue Chip A Acc ‡@	770.11	...	+3.15	...
UK Smaller Companies A Acc ‡@	4317.95	...	-13.59	...
UK Smaller Companies A Inc ‡@	3872.91	...	-12.19	...
UK Special Situations A Acc ‡@	1434.79	...	-7.40	...
UK Special Situations A Inc ‡@	514.33	...	-2.65	...

For ISIS Asset Mgmt see F&C Fd Mgmt Ltd (OEICS)

JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS
Investors Serv: 0800 832 832 Dlng: 0845 946 4646

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
All Stks Credit A Inc ‡@	109.70	...	-0.40	2.50
Asian Div Inc U Trst Inc ‡@	73.86	...	-0.25	5.88
Cautious Man Fd A Acc ‡@	277.10	...	-1.40	3.25
Cautious Man Fd A Inc ‡@	134.20	...	-0.70	3.31
China Opp Fund A Acc ‡@	1082.00	...	-8.00	0.30
Emg Mkts Opps Fd A Acc ‡@	191.80	...	+0.50	0.77
Erpn Grth Fund A Acc ‡@	301.30	...	-2.00	1.16
Erpn Sel Opps Fd A Acc ‡@	2330.00	...	-23.00	0.86
Fix Int Mnthly Inc Fd Acc ‡@	27.86	...	-0.04	4.50
Global Equity Fund Acc ‡@	4347.00	...	+4.00	...
Global Equity Income A Inc ‡@	64.27	...	+0.01	3.34
Global Tech A Acc ‡@	3386.00	...	+16.00	...
Instl UK Idx Opps A Acc ‡@	113.54	...	-0.53	2.96
M-Asset Abs Ret A Acc ‡@	161.20	...	-0.10	0.82
M-Man Active Fd A Acc ‡@	258.10	...	-0.20	...
M-Man Inc Grth A Inc ‡@	143.30	...	...	3.27
M-Man Inc Grth Fd A Acc ‡@	187.60	...	...	3.14
Sterling Bond U Trst Acc ‡@	198.40	...	-0.80	2.20
Sterling Bond U Trst Inc ‡@	53.51	...	-0.20	2.23
Strategic Bond A Inc ‡@	97.42	...	-0.24	3.18
UK Abs Ret Fd A Acc ‡@	171.70	...	-0.10	0.65
UK Alpha Fund A Acc ‡@	131.60	...	-0.70	...
UK Irsh Sm Co Fd A Acc ‡@	742.50	...	-1.70	...
UK Property A Acc @	264.95	278.15	+0.01	...
UK Property A Inc @	105.80	111.07	...	...
US Growth Fund A Acc ‡@	1917.00	...	+11.00	...



JP MORGAN ASSET MGMT
OEIC

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Asia A Acc ‡@	259.00	...	+2.20	...
Emerging Mkts ‡@	261.50	...	+3.00	...
Eur Dyn (ex-UK) A Acc ‡@	270.30	...	+4.70	0.47
Euro Smllr Cos ‡@	864.00	...	+17.40	...
Europe A Acc ‡@	1734.00	...	+35.00	1.35
Gbl Hi Yld Bd A Acc ‡@	117.30	...	+1.10	5.30
Gbl Hi Yld Bd A Inc ‡@	30.89	...	+0.29	5.45
Gl ex-UK Bd A Acc ‡@	257.40	...	-0.70	...
Gl ex-UK Bd A Inc ‡@	196.80	...	-0.50	...
Glb Fins A Acc ‡@	1077.00	...	+1.00	...
Global A Acc ‡@	2049.00	...	+11.00	...
Japan A Acc ‡@	516.80	...	+6.20	...
Multi-Man Tst A Acc ‡@	1268.00	...	+16.00	...
Multi-Man Tst A Inc ‡@	1127.00	...	+15.00	...
Nat Resources ‡@	951.20	...	+17.30	...
New Europe A ‡@	155.70	...	+12.00	2.11
Portfolio ‡@	295.60	...	+0.40	0.98
Stg Corp Bd A Acc ‡@	85.59	...	-0.13	1.14
Stg Corp Bd A Inc ‡@	48.30	...	-0.08	1.14
UK Act 350 A Acc ‡@	199.00	...	-2.20	...
UK Dynamic Acc ‡@	206.70	...	+4.30	...
UK Dynamic Inc ‡@	148.20	...	+3.10	...
UK Equity A Acc ‡@	401.90	...	+0.60	...
UK Equity A Inc ‡@	46.44	...	+0.07	...
UK Eqy & Bd Inc Acc ‡@	167.10	...	-0.20	3.41
UK Eqy & Bd Inc Inc ‡@	90.29	...	-0.48	3.50
UK Higher Inc A Acc ‡@	1132.00	...	+7.00	...
UK Higher Inc A Inc ‡@	531.30	...	+2.00	...
UK Sm Cos A Acc ‡@	563.30	...	+7.00	0.34
UK Str Eq Inc A Acc ‡@	197.90	...	+3.50	...
UK Str Eq Inc A Inc ‡@	100.50	...	+1.77	...
US A Acc ‡@	1036.00	...	+25.00	...
US Sm Cos A Acc ‡@	976.20	...	+14.00	...

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD
020 7581 3020

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Absolute Return ‡@	31.73	...	-0.04	...
Distribution and Growth ‡@	97.43	...	+0.53	2.67
Emg Euro Opps ‡@	145.34	...	-31.23	...
Euro Special Sits ‡@	453.79	...	-3.80	...
European ‡@	2932.87	...	-24.66	...
Financial Opps ‡@	722.53	...	+4.89	1.13
Income Trust ‡@	486.33	...	-1.95	4.59
Merlin Bal (Acc) ‡@	232.64	...	+1.38	3.65
Merlin Gwth (Acc) ‡@	554.76	...	+3.42	...
Merlin Inc (Acc) ‡@	340.60	...	+1.22	3.12
Merlin Wwide (Inc) ‡@	395.24	...	+1.90	...
UK Growth ‡@	253.22	...	-1.03	0.89
UK Special Sits (Inc) ‡@	205.60	...	-0.87	...

LEGAL & GENERAL (UT MGRS) LTD
Enquiries: 0870 050 0955 Dealing: 0870 050 0956

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Equity Acc @	2616.00	2639.00	-8.00	...
Equity Dist @	893.80	902.00	-2.70	...
Euro Ind Acc ‡@	531.70	...	-4.00	...
Euro Ind Inc ‡@	340.00	...	-2.60	...
Fixed Int Acc ‡@	127.90	...	-0.40	2.62
Fixed Int Dist ‡@	59.18	...	-0.23	2.65
Glob Gwth Acc @	243.90	243.90	-1.30	1.15
Glob Health Acc ‡@	108.60	...	-0.20	0.83
Glob Tech Acc ‡@	109.10	...	+0.20	0.04
Gwth Tst Acc @	106.00	106.50	-1.00	...
High Inc Acc ‡@	124.90	...	-0.50	5.57
Japan Ind Acc ‡@	73.46	...	+0.14	1.68
Pacific Ind Acc ‡@	197.40	...	-0.80	3.09
UK 100 Ind Acc @	180.90	180.90	+0.90	...
UK Active Opps Acc @	249.90	252.90	-0.10	...
UK Index Acc ‡@	344.30	...	-1.50	...
UK Index Dist ‡@	163.50	...	-0.80	...
US Ind Acc ‡@	871.40	...	-0.60	0.86
Worldwide Acc ‡@	339.00	...	-1.10	0.80

M & G SECURITIES
Enq: 0800 390 390 Dealing Line: 0800 328 3196
Authorised Inv Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Charifund Inc ‡	1395.86	...	-6.41	6.08

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 1

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Euro Smlr Cos Acc ‡	525.29	...	-3.39	...
Euro Smlr Cos Inc ‡	462.50	...	-3.00	...

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 2

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Extra Income Inc ‡	646.27	...	-2.04	5.90
Gilt & Fxd Int Inc ‡	70.71	...	-0.41	3.28
Gl Hi Yd Bd Inc ‡	38.95	...	+0.02	5.90
Index Linked Bd Inc ‡	106.82	...	-1.07	...
Index Trckr Inc ‡	74.29	...	-0.35	...
Short Dated Corp Bd Inc ‡	24.68	...	+0.05	3.48
UK Select A Inc ‡	2669.63	...	-12.94	...

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 3

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Corp Bd A Inc ‡	32.48	...	-0.14	4.34
Dividend Inc ‡	48.95	...	-0.24	6.47
Recovery A Inc ‡	102.63	...	-1.43	...
Sml Cos Inc ‡	316.91	...	-1.90	2.73

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 4

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Episode Allocation A Inc ‡@	138.21	...	-1.13	...

MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD
0808 005 5555

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
High Income	84.40	84.40	-0.09	4.60
High Income Acc	242.00	242.00	-0.30	4.47
UK 100 Comp Acc @	454.80	454.80	-3.10	2.98
UK 100 Cos @	218.50	218.50	-1.50	3.05
UK Select Pflo @	329.50	329.50	-2.10	3.29
UK Selection Port Acc @	693.30	693.30	-4.70	3.63
Worldwide Mgd Acc @	950.50	950.50	+2.00	1.54
Wwide Mgd @	550.40	550.40	+1.20	0.56

MORGAN STANLEY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD
Enquires: 0800 0961 962
The Morgan Stanley Funds (UK)
Class A Shares
Equity

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Dev Opp Fund F Acc ‡@	795.77	...	-1.17	...
Dev Opp Fund I Acc ‡@	790.84	...	-1.17	...
Glob Bal Inc F F Acc ‡@	943.96	...	-1.32	4.29
Glob Bal Inc F F Inc ‡@	858.24	...	-1.20	4.42
Glob Bal Inc F I Acc ‡@	942.20	...	-1.31	4.29
Glob Bal Inc F I Inc ‡@	856.64	...	-1.20	4.42
Glob Bal Sust F F Acc ‡@	944.55	...	-1.03	1.80
Glob Bal Sust F F Inc ‡@	917.70	...	-1.01	1.82
Glob Bal Sust F I Acc ‡@	943.01	...	-1.03	1.74
Glob Bal Sust F I Inc ‡@	917.43	...	-1.01	1.74
Glob Br Eq Inc Fund F Inc ‡@	1334.89	...	+1.75	4.02
Glob Br Eq Inc Fund I Acc ‡@	1880.19	...	+2.45	3.99
Glob Br Eq Inc Fund I Inc ‡@	1425.97	...	+1.86	4.10
Glob Br Fund I Acc (PH) ‡@	1652.68	...	-5.82	0.74
Glob Br Fund I Acc (PH) ‡@	14168.03	...	+18.56	0.76
Glob Br Fund I Inc (PH) ‡@	1571.48	...	-5.53	0.75
Glob Br Fund I Inc (PH) ‡@	3862.61	...	+5.06	0.77
Glob Ins Fund F Acc ‡@	584.87	...	-0.65	...
Glob Ins Fund F Inc ‡@	584.87	...	-0.65	...
Glob Ins Fund I Acc ‡@	581.46	...	-0.65	...
Glob Ins Fund I Inc ‡@	581.46	...	-0.65	...
Glob Sust Fund F Acc (PH) ‡@	1248.12	...	-3.99	0.52
Glob Sust Fund F Inc ‡@	1314.82	...	+2.31	0.53
Glob Sust Fund I Acc ‡@	1336.83	...	+2.34	0.39
Glob Sust Fund I Acc (PH) ‡@	1245.26	...	-3.99	0.38
Glob Sustain Fund F Acc ‡@	1345.00	...	+2.35	0.53
Stg Corp Bond F F Acc ‡@	118.37	...	-0.42	3.72
Stg Corp Bond F F Inc ‡@	91.30	...	-0.33	3.80
Stg Corp Bond F I Acc ‡@	2515.14	...	-8.99	3.46
Stg Corp Bond F I Inc ‡@	1287.79	...	-4.61	3.55
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F F Acc ‡@	936.36	...	-0.99	3.25
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F F Inc ‡@	881.74	...	-0.93	3.34
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F I Acc ‡@	931.27	...	-0.99	3.06
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F I Inc ‡@	881.36	...	-0.94	3.12
US Adv F F Acc ‡@	1557.29	...	-0.56	...
US Adv F F Acc (PH) ‡@	892.73	...	-5.90	...
US Adv F I Acc ‡@	1654.18	...	-0.60	...
US Adv F I Acc (PH) ‡@	932.61	...	-6.19	...

SANTANDER UNIT TST MGRS
08457 413002

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Bal Pfolio Inc ‡@	110.50	...	+0.40	...
Bal Port Gwth Acc ‡@	230.50	...	-0.20	1.78
Equity Inc Inc ‡@	194.20	...	...	5.25
N&P UK Gwth Inc ‡@	182.80	...	+0.10	...
Stkmkt 100 Tkr @	261.10	261.10	-2.40	...
UK Growth Acc ‡@	465.10	...	+0.50	...
UK Growth Inc ‡@	244.90	...	+0.20	...

SCOTTISH MUTUAL INV MNGRS LTD
0141 248 6100

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
European Inc	1777.00	1873.48	+4.40	...
Far Eastern Inc	584.69	617.09	-0.73	1.42
Intl Growth Inc	380.56	400.59	+0.02	0.75
Japanese Inc	41.85	41.85	+0.43	0.56
Mutual European	2762.93	2908.99	-21.63	1.11
Mutual Far Eastern	890.42	939.76	-6.19	1.17
Mutual North Am	1983.00	2092.88	+6.23	0.24
Mutual UK Eq	1419.40	1428.80	-10.35	...
Nth American Inc	1227.65	1295.67	-7.28	...
UK Equity Inc	562.23	593.38	+1.31	...

SCOTTISH WIDOWS UNIT TRUST MGRS
0845 300 2244
Authorised Inv Funds (OEICs)
OEIC A Class
Managed Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Bal Port A Acc ‡@	237.60	...	+0.80	0.01
Caut Port A Acc ‡@	207.10	...	+0.30	...
Caut Port A Inc ‡@	152.00	...	+0.30	...
Opps Port A Acc ‡@	280.20	...	+1.30	...
Prog Port A Acc ‡@	266.60	...	+1.10	...

Overseas Growth Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Eur Sel Gth A Acc ‡@	3367.00	...	+2.00	2.14

Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Trkr A Acc ‡@	384.40	...	-0.80	...
UK Trkr A Inc ‡@	190.40	...	-0.40	...

UK and Income Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Corp Bond A Acc ‡@	275.70	...	-0.80	2.82
Corp Bond A Inc ‡@	100.50	...	-0.20	2.86
Envir Invtr A Acc ‡@	371.40	...	-1.10	1.85
Hi Inc Bond A Ac ‡@	237.90	...	-1.30	...
Hi Inc Bond A Inc ‡@	68.30	...	-0.39	...
Hi Res A Acc ‡@	376.00	...	-0.90	3.98
Hi Res A Inc ‡@	113.70	...	-0.30	4.09
Safety Plus A Acc ‡@	40.49	...	...	...
Strat Inc A Acc ‡@	186.00	...	-0.30	3.80
Strat Inc A Inc ‡@	79.74	...	-0.13	3.88
UK Gwth A Acc ‡@	195.90	...	-0.30	...
UK Sel Gwth A Acc ‡@	2280.00	...	-4.00	...

OEIC B Class
Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Trkr B Acc ‡@	424.70	...	-0.80	...
UK Trkr B Inc ‡@	189.40	...	-0.30	...

UK and Income Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Corp Bond B Acc ‡@	370.70	...	+0.90	...
Corp Bond B Inc ‡@	136.30	...	+0.30	...
UK Gwth B Acc ‡@	205.60	...	-0.30	...
UK Sel Gwth B Acc ‡@	2481.00	...	...	...

OEIC C Class
UK and Income Investment Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Gth C Inc ‡@	126.50	...	-0.20	...
UK Sel Gwth C Acc ‡@	2598.00	...	...	...

STANDARD LIFE INVESTMENTS
0845 279 3003
Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Shares

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AAA Inc CAT Acc ‡@	87.32	...	-0.17	1.43
AAA Inc CAT Inc ‡@	48.54	...	-0.09	1.44
AAA Income Acc ‡@	95.29	...	-0.18	1.84
Amer Eq Gth Acc ‡@	211.00	...	+1.30	...
Corp Bond Acc ‡@	152.10	...	-0.60	3.47
Corp Bond Inc ‡@	49.52	...	-0.18	3.55
Euro Eq Gth Acc ‡@	262.10	...	+3.90	...
Glb Advtg CAT Acc ‡@	148.60	...	-0.10	1.39
Glob Advtg Acc ‡@	196.20	...	-0.20	1.36
Glob Eq Uncstrd Acc ‡@	169.50	...	+0.30	...
Higher Inc Acc ‡@	147.30	...	...	4.55
Higher Inc Inc ‡@	44.22	...	-0.01	4.69
Japan Eq Gth Acc ‡@	127.40	...	...	...
Managed Acc ‡@	359.70	...	-0.40	1.57
Select Inc Acc ‡@	91.51	...	...	...
Select Inc Inc ‡@	51.26	...	-0.26	...
UK Eq Gth Acc ‡@	372.70	...	+1.70	...
UK Eq Hi Alpha ‡@	230.00	...	+1.00	...
UK Eq Hi Inc Acc ‡@	262.20	...	-1.40	4.66
UK Eq Hi Inc Inc ‡@	68.85	...	-0.37	4.82
UK Ethical Acc ‡@	196.30	...	-1.40	...
UK Opps Acc ‡@	234.40	...	...	...
UK Opps Inc ‡@	211.70	...	...	...
UK Smlr Cos Acc ‡@	720.00	...	-2.90	0.69

SVS BROWN SHIPLEY FUNDS
Enquiries:0141 222 1151

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Balanced A Acc ‡@	136.52	...	-0.07	...
Balanced A Inc ‡@	120.72	...	-0.06	...
Cautious A Acc ‡@	111.15	...	-0.03	1.93
Cautious A Inc ‡@	94.83	...	-0.03	1.95
Dynamic A Acc ‡@	338.25	...	+0.03	...
Dynamic A Inc ‡@	302.26	...	+0.03	...
Growth A Acc ‡@	345.95	...	+0.03	...
Income A Acc ‡@	247.58	...	-0.04	1.86
Sterling Bond Acc ‡@	242.37	...	-0.28	...
Sterling Bond Inc ‡@	97.00	...	-0.11	...

THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS
Client Serv: 0800 0683000
Intermediary Serv: 0800 0684000
Institutional Shares (Class 2) (500000 GBP)

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Threadneedle UK Eq Opps Ins Inc ‡@	128.91	...	-0.80	1.51

Retail Shares (Class 1)

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Threadneedle HY Bd Rtl Inc ‡@	36.62	...	+0.02	4.51
Threadneedle Mthly Etr Inc Rtl Inc ‡@	77.37	...	-0.41	3.68
Threadneedle SterlingCorpBd Ins Inc ‡@	51.99	...	-0.17	2.89
Threadneedle SterlingCorpBd Rtl Inc ‡@	51.88	...	-0.18	2.56
Threadneedle Stg Bd Ret Inc ‡@	41.50	...	-0.25	2.57
Threadneedle Strat Bd Ret ‡@	40.11	...	-0.06	4.01
Threadneedle UK Eq Inc Rtl Inc ‡@	97.20	...	-0.71	3.56
Threadneedle UK Growth & Inc Rtl Inc ‡@	92.11	...	-0.63	...
Threadneedle UK Insti Rtl ‡@	179.34	...	-1.06	1.90
Threadneedle UK Mthly Inc Rtl Inc ‡@	66.53	...	-0.35	4.36
Threadneedle UK Rtl Inc ‡@	134.65	...	-0.95	...
Threadneedle UK Smaller Coms Rtl Inc ‡@	338.48	...	-1.28	...

For Resolution see Ignis

TU FUND MANAGERS LIMITED

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
British	895.40	895.40	-8.40	0.96
European	210.70	219.40	+1.00	...

* Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return); † Ex dividend; ‡Middle price; . . . No significant data. # Periodic charge deducted from capital; @ Exit charge

British funds

Index-linked

12 month High	Low	Stock	Price (£)	+/–	Int Yld %	Grs rd yld
125.95	82.66	Tr IL 0⅝% 42	89.86	– .46	0.70	1.22
114.01	66.79	Tr IL 0⅛% 48	74.20	– .57	...	1.35
125.06	72.64	Tr IL 0½% 50	81.18	– .68	...	1.35
118.78	65.69	Tr IL 0¼% 52	74.60	– .75	...	1.32
156.24	88.77	Tr IL 1¼% 55	99.16	–1.13	1.39	1.28
116.52	60.50	Tr IL 0⅛% 56	69.56	–1.00	...	1.25
117.10	60.14	Tr IL 0⅛% 58	68.73	–1.09	...	1.24
132.13	64.93	Tr IL 0⅜% 62	75.26	–1.30	...	1.18
126.92	55.87	Tr IL 0⅛% 65	67.34	–1.31	...	1.09
129.79	54.65	Tr IL 0⅛% 68	66.87	–1.41	...	1.06
148.46	55.40	Tr IL 0⅛% 73	70.34	–1.70	...	0.86
113.96	72.26	Tr IL 0⅛% 44	78.88	– .44	...	1.30
113.98	70.25	Tr IL 0⅛% 46	76.34	– .50	...	1.35
130.87	80.78	Tr IL 0¾% 47	87.70	– .56	0.87	1.35
107.64	95.63	Tr IL 0⅛% 26	96.88	– .06	...	1.38
116.19	99.63	Tr IL 1¼% 27	101.36	– .13	1.35	0.92
110.69	93.33	Tr IL 0⅛% 28	96.59	– .10	...	0.83
111.09	92.36	Tr IL 0⅛% 29	96.11	– .14	...	0.84
362.31	301.39	Tr IL 4⅛% 30 *	335.18	– .48	1.93	0.70
114.25	90.61	Tr IL 0⅛% 31	96.19	– .20	...	0.62
126.33	99.08	Tr IL 1¼% 32	104.96	– .25	1.19	0.69
121.09	92.56	Tr IL 0¾% 34	99.10	– .22	...	0.84
267.61	206.76	Tr IL 2% 35 *	238.50	– .67	1.02	0.85
114.78	82.01	Tr IL 0⅛% 36	89.67	– .38	...	0.96
131.32	94.08	Tr IL 1⅛% 37	101.29	– .42	1.17	1.03
114.40	78.25	Tr IL 0⅛% 39	85.53	– .34	...	1.14
123.74	84.60	Tr IL 0⅝% 40	91.96	– .36	...	1.16
115.08	75.20	Tr IL 0⅛% 41	83.00	– .39	...	1.18
106.60	97.72	Tr IL 0⅛% 24	98.24	+ .03	...	3.43
380.26	359.04	Tr IL 2½% 24 *	376.77	+ .09	1.44	2.64

Longs (Over 15 years)

12 month High	Low	Stock	Price (£)	+/–	Int Yld %	Grs rd yld
115.69	89.35	Tr 4¼% 46	92.09	– .32	4.62	4.82
61.15	43.93	Tr 0⅞% 46	46.71	– .20	...	4.77
70.18	51.06	Tr 1½% 47	53.54	– .23	...	4.79
74.08	53.78	Tr 1¾% 49	55.88	– .25	...	4.76
119.01	98.29	Tr 4¾% 38	100.44	– .45	4.73	4.71
72.65	58.05	Tr 1⅛% 39	60.87	– .26	...	4.73
112.62	92.08	Tr 4¼% 39	94.45	– .34	4.50	4.75
118.09	89.75	Tr 4¼% 49	91.88	– .35	4.63	4.80
63.87	44.40	Tr 1¼% 51	46.37	– .23	...	4.73
110.81	82.24	Tr 3¾% 52	84.15	– .37	...	4.77
67.79	46.78	Tr 1½% 53	48.68	– .24	...	4.72
70.42	48.25	Tr 1⅝% 54	50.01	– .25	...	4.70
123.23	90.07	Tr 4¼% 55	92.27	– .40	4.61	4.72
73.50	49.39	Tr 1¾% 57	51.08	– .23	...	4.62
122.75	86.40	Tr 4% 60	88.59	– .38	...	4.65
46.24	26.21	Tr 0½% 61	28.18	– .19	...	4.41
91.47	59.83	Tr 2½% 65	61.63	– .26	...	4.56
116.13	77.61	Tr 3½% 68	79.68	– .34	...	4.57
53.35	35.82	Tr 0⅝% 50	37.77	– .20	...	4.71
113.24	91.30	Tr 4¼% 40	93.92	– .31	...	4.77
71.44	54.72	Tr 1¼% 41	57.82	– .25	...	4.75
99.00	76.78	Tr 3¼% 44	79.89	– .27	...	4.81
117.80	93.79	Tr 4½% 42	96.46	– .36	4.67	4.78
102.89	79.61	Tr 3½% 45	82.48	– .28	...	4.82
113.86	63.35	Tr 0⅛% 51	72.11	– .67	...	1.34
70.95	42.99	Tr 1⅝% 71	44.66	– .25	...	4.40
57.59	32.96	Tr 1⅛% 73	34.84	– .18	...	4.31
103.74	81.74	Tr 3¾% 53	83.74	– .33	...	4.77

Mediums (5-15 years)

12 month High	Low	Stock	Price (£)	+/–	Int Yld %	Grs rd yld
93.30	85.65	Tr 1¼% 27	88.19	– .18	...	4.61
106.29	96.63	Tr 4¼% 27	98.52	– .19	4.31	4.64
87.24	79.15	Tr 0⅛% 28	82.45	– .19	...	4.57
93.52	84.72	Tr 1⅝% 28	86.99	– .22	...	4.49
91.05	84.28	Tr 0⅜% 26	87.42	– .13	...	4.76
103.82	95.72	Tr 4 ⅛% 27	97.52	– .17	...	4.93
95.52	89.28	Tr 1½% 26	91.47	– .13	...	4.71
111.30	94.67	Tr 4¼% 36	96.69	– .41	4.40	4.60
82.00	67.54	Tr 1¾% 37	70.12	– .35	...	4.68
82.38	72.39	Tr 0⅜% 30	75.43	– .22	...	4.43
114.12	100.56	Tr 4¾% 30	101.96	– .28	4.66	4.43
79.47	69.25	Tr 0¼% 31	72.32	– .24	...	4.44
83.95	73.06	Tr 1% 32	75.91	– .26	...	4.47
111.19	97.27	Tr 4¼% 32	98.83	– .33	4.30	4.41
101.14	88.88	Tr 4 ⅛% 27	90.49	– .33	...	4.50
79.92	68.57	Tr 0⅞% 33	71.24	– .29	...	4.51
113.65	97.71	Tr 4½% 34	99.54	– .38	4.52	4.55
73.11	61.24	Tr 0⅝% 35	64.01	– .31	...	4.58
117.76	104.85	Tr 6% 28	106.64	– .27	5.63	4.56
86.40	77.61	Tr 0½% 29	80.63	– .21	...	4.59
87.71	78.21	Tr 0⅞% 29	81.08	– .24	...	4.44
104.43	...	Tr 3¾% 38	89.79	– .39	...	4.74

Shorts (under 5 years)

12 month High	Low	Stock	Price (£)	+/–	Int Yld %	Grs rd yld
94.97	90.15	Tr 0⅝% 25	92.82	– .07	...	4.96
97.82	92.80	Tr 2% 25	94.28	– .09	...	5.04
100.88	95.02	Tr 3½% 25	96.54	– .10	...	5.24
92.38	86.33	Tr 0⅛% 26	89.69	– .10	...	4.73
98.06	94.34	Tr 0⅛% 24	98.06	+ ...	...	5.04
97.50	94.79	Tr 1% 24	97.47	– .01	...	5.16
99.58	96.82	Tr 2¾% 24	97.64	– .02	...	5.20
100.00	98.04	Tr 2¼% 23	100.00	+ ...	...	2.23
94.34	90.04	Tr 0¼% 25	93.59	– .06	...	5.05
104.80	99.24	Tr 5% 25	99.93	– .07	5.00	5.05

* maturities having an eight-month indexation lag.

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Pensions lifeboat's appetite for risk could prove costly for taxpayers

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

Taxpayers could become liable for hundreds of billions of pounds of pension promises after the Pension Protection Fund declared itself "enthusiastic" about taking on the role of consolidator for potentially thousands of defined benefit schemes.

The PPF, the lifeboat scheme for schemes whose sponsoring employers fail, said it was well placed to take on a role absorbing healthier DB schemes, reducing unit costs and rejigging their asset mix to make riskier investments. The PPF was responding to ambitious proposals from Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, to encourage DB schemes to take on more risk, putting more cash into productive investments such as private equity and infrastructure, preferably in the UK. It said that if it took on only the smallest 4,500 DB schemes, that would push £60 billion of extra investment into productive assets.

But it also admitted that it would require "access to capital" to cope with tail risks such as a crash in financial markets, a hint that in a worst-case scenario it might need a government bailout. At present the PPF is mostly funded by levies on all DB schemes.

A theoretical call on the public purse could be regarded as explosive because it would require the support of taxpayers, the great majority of whom save in much less generous and non-guaranteed defined contribution schemes.

John Ralfe, a pensions consultant, said: "This is a huge policy change. Why on earth should taxpayers start guaranteeing hundreds of billions of pounds of private sector DB pensions?" Most private sector DB schemes, often dubbed "gold-plated", have long since been shut to new members. But they remain huge, with assets of about £1.5 trillion and outstanding pension promises to about 10 million people.

The pensions industry also expressed concerns. The Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association said private sector DB "superfunds" — a different attempt to consolidate schemes — should be given a chance to work first.

The PPF envisages setting up a new ringfenced consolidating fund that would be managed alongside its existing rescue fund. This has already taken on 1,000 troubled schemes with 300,000 members over its 18-year existence. Members are paid most of their pensions subject to haircuts.

The fund said: "We have the capability and experience to assume a new consolidator role to support the government's productive finance agenda and improve outcomes for members, and are enthusiastic about the opportunity to extend our remit in this way."

Fitness franchise races for $1bn status with UK expansion

A former physiologist who started a Pilates class from her spare bedroom after losing her job is targeting the UK to help turn her fitness studio franchise into a billion-dollar brand (Dominic Walsh writes).

Ellen Latham combined science and fitness in what she called the "Orange Effect" in 2007 and went on to open a fitness centre in South Florida. Now her Orangetheory Fitness has more than 1,500 studios and a target of adding another 38 UK studios to the existing nine by 2026, creating 400 jobs.

Latham, 66, introduced an exercise programme, based on heart rate, that she said would "metabolically charge the body by adding rowers, treadmills and other equipment".

Orangetheory's classes claim to take members through five heart rate zones while taking part in rowing, cardio and strength training.

The goal is to spend up to 20 minutes in its "orange zone" to optimise the impact on metabolism.

Ellen's Ultimate Workout, as it was called, has been rebranded as Orangetheory since 2010 and carries on to this day.



In the US there are studio franchises in 50 states and the business has a presence in 23 other countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and France.

In the UK, Orangetheory has overseen funding worth more than $30 million through a combination of corporate and franchisee investment.

The cost of launching a studio starts at about $500,000. The company aims to expand the number of its studios in the UK and Ireland after starting talks with potential franchise partners in London, Glasgow and Dublin.



ORANGETHEORY

Workouts developed by Ellen Latham, left, aim to help studio members spend up to 20 minutes with their heart rates in the "orange zone"

Door is wide open for fraudsters to pocket Covid grants, say MPs

James Hurley

MPs have accused the government of leaving the door "wide open" to criminals by failing to police £22.6 billion worth of pandemic business grants.

Only about £21 million of an estimated £1.1 billion lost to fraud and error on Covid-19 grants has been recovered, the public accounts committee said. The business department has been too "slow to take action to recover losses" from the grants distributed via English councils, the committee found.

The money was issued across eight schemes that can be grouped into three separate "cohorts", primarily corresponding to significant waves of Covid-19 restrictions. The grants helped companies in areas such as retail and hospitality, tourism and events.

Officials told MPs that checking payments is expensive, there are legal questions about the ability to recover some and it will be "incredibly hard" to recover much more of the losses.

Dame Meg Hillier, who chairs the committee, said: "It is simply not good enough to give up on recovering this money simply because it is difficult." She added: "Public trust is harmed if the government shrugs its shoulders at criminals lining their pockets."

The government doesn't know what effect the spending had or how much was spent unnecessarily, MPs found.

"How far the money succeeded in protecting businesses and employment is still not clear," they said in a report. The findings add to concerns about value for money in other areas, including tens of billions of pounds worth of state-backed business loans and the £70 billion wage furlough scheme.

A non-executive director on the board of the Department for Business and Trade is reviewing what can be done to improve recoveries. The department is also looking at following up with local authorities that have provided less information on fraud and error.

About £985 million of the estimated fraud and error losses are from grants in the earliest schemes, most of which had been paid out by late May 2020.

Companies and business groups complained at the time of a postcode lottery in grants, with some councils slower than others to make payments.

MPs also warned that "likely underinvestment as a result of financial pressures faced by local authorities made it harder to deliver" the schemes. Ministers' distance from the "practical realities on the ground" caused "confusion, delays and uncertainty", the committee concluded.

Officials acknowledged to the committee that, in the early stage of the crisis, the connection between policymaking and knowledge about delivery of the schemes was "not as strong as we would have liked it to be".

The Treasury also accepted that there were things it should have known but did not at the start of the pandemic about varieties of businesses and the capabilities of councils.

Hillier said: "Never again should a national emergency find policy being written as we go along, without firm planning and good local data, with local authorities not properly funded to work in partnership on the support required. The next emergency must find the government rigorously prepared."

She added: "The lack of planning from government also meant that a door was left wide open in these schemes to fraudsters."

The Department for Business and Trade was approached for comment.

Regulator to act fast on Farage-style 'debanking'

Ben Martin Banking Editor

The City regulator has said it will take "prompt action" against banks, which could involve fines, if it finds flaws in their treatment of politicians as it cracks down after the scandal over the closure of Nigel Farage's accounts.

Lenders face scrutiny after it emerged in July that Coutts — a private bank owned by NatWest, which is funded by the taxpayer — had decided to close accounts held by Farage, the prominent Brexiteer, partly because it believed his views "were at odds with our position as an inclusive organisation".

This triggered a row over freedom of speech and the Financial Conduct Authority is undertaking a review into the way banks handle "politically exposed persons" (PEPs), as well as their family members and close associates.

As part of its inquiry, the regulator wrote last month to MPs, peers and other prominent individuals to gather information about how they have been treated by banks.

Yesterday the watchdog stepped up its investigation by setting out the terms of reference for its review and saying it "will take prompt action if any significant deficiencies are identified in the arrangements of any firm assessed".

Banks are required to carry out extra due diligence on customers who are deemed to be politically exposed as part of efforts to combat the laundering of money gained through abuse of office.

However, the Farage scandal has raised concerns that some banks are taking an overzealous and inappropriate stance towards "debanking" some British public figures. It has also thrown a spotlight on the wider issue of customers being denied bank accounts, which is the subject of a separate review by the regulator.

Sarah Pritchard, an executive director at the authority, said the PEP rules were "designed to keep the financial system clean, free from corruption and guard against financial crime". She added: "It's important that they are implemented proportionately and don't create unnecessary barriers for public servants and their families."

The regulator will issue its report into the treatment of PEPs by the end of June but said that it would not wait for the completion of its review to censure banks that are found wanting. Serious problems may lead to enforcement action by the regulator, which could result in fines being levied.

The Farage debacle has already resulted in the abrupt exit of Dame Alison Rose, who had been the chief executive of NatWest, and the departure of Peter Flavel, who had run Coutts.

Emma Powell Tempus

Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips



Right tools for building more revenue

ASHTEAD

Market cap	Q1 revenue
£23.9bn	growth 19%

The fortunes of the tool hire company Ashtead are tied to the health of the shaky US economy. That explains why the FTSE 100 group is so keen to talk up structural catalysts for growth, as well as its ability to defend against a downturn.

There is no sign of any trepidation among US businesses feeding through to demand for the sort of fork-lift trucks and jackhammers that Ashtead leases out. Rental revenue in its core market was 16 per cent higher in the first quarter of this year, better than consensus and at the top end of an annual guidance range of 13 to 16 per cent this year.

True, the pace has slowed, against the 20 per cent-plus rates clocked up last year, but those are punchy comparators. Sales have not been fuelled primarily by racy levels of inflation either. About two thirds of organic revenue growth in the US came from better volumes in the first quarter, with the rest from higher rental rates. Higher sales volumes did more of the heavy lifting last year, too. Sales guidance for the UK division was cut to between 6 and 9 per cent, from 10 to 13 per cent, as the market has weakened. Increases in rental rates have failed to keep pace with cost inflation. It will have little impact on Ashtead — despite retaining its headquarters in London, the UK accounts for just 2 per cent of the group's profits.

There is a case for offloading its UK operations altogether, although it is not a course of action that Brendan Horgan, the Ashtead boss, says he wants to pursue. Investors don't expect the boom times to last. The shares trade at 15 times forward earnings, less than half the ten-year peak reached in 2021 and below the long-running average. Ashtead has reduced its construction exposure and diversified into speciality tool rentals, which should lessen the pain from any fall in new projects.

Construction accounts for 45 per cent of revenue, versus almost 90 per cent in the two years after the 2008 financial crisis. About 30 per cent of revenue comes from speciality lines, up from 13 per cent at the time of the last crash. The balance sheet is also on more solid ground, with leverage at 1.6 times adjusted profits before interest, tax and other charges, at the lower end of a target range of between 1.5 and 2. It compares with a multiple of 2.7 in the run-up to the last big downturn in 2007. Naturally, that could easily tick up in the event of a fall in profits. A peak-to-trough decline of the same magnitude as during the 2008 financial crisis would push leverage up to 2.4.

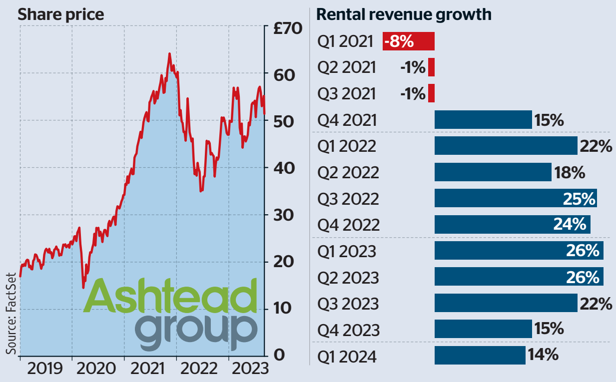
Ashtead is attempting to capitalise on a consolidating US hire market, expanding its fleet and buying up more small businesses next year. It has paid off — since 2010 it has more than tripled its market share to 13 per cent, making it the second-largest player behind United Rentals.

Spending more on its fleet has also meant net debt increased to $9.7 billion by the end of July, up about a quarter year over year, which was accompanied by a higher interest bill. That held back adjusted pre-tax profit growth to 11 per cent in the quarter. Just 60 per cent of drawn debt is fixed, which means its financing costs could rise again this year. The fear is that an expanded fleet sits gathering dust in the event of a downturn, but thus far utilisation rates have held firm.

Ashtead is recouping its outlay on equipment just as quickly, banking just over 60 per cent of the money spent in the US market within 12 months in the first quarter, in line with the same period last year.

With spending up to $4.3 billion this year, Horgan still thinks the business can generate $300 million in free cash. Without such a lofty capital expenditure budget the considerable cash being thrown off by the business could boost its coffers pretty quickly.

Hire gains



ADVICE Hold
WHY Investors are compensated for macro risks and slower growth by a cheaper valuation

WITAN INVESTMENT TRUST

Discount/net	Dividend
asset val 10.4%	yield 2.6%

Diversification does not always lead to the best returns. Take Witan Investment Trust's performance this year. The FTSE 250 constituent ended August within a hair's breadth of its benchmark, having lost a comfortable lead.

Witan's underweight position in American stocks, 40 per cent of assets versus 50 per cent for the yardstick it tries to beat, is partly responsible. It is also overweight in the unfashionable UK market.

Its benchmark is a composite of the MSCI All Country World and MSCI UK indices.

The bulk of Witan's assets are managed by third-party investment houses, including Lindsell Train and Artemis. The idea is that by using many managers, the risk of one having an off year and impeding performance is reduced.

Its eight managers have delivered varying performance this year. Lansdowne, which manages the largest chunk of assets at 18 per cent, lagged its benchmark during the first half of the year, as value stocks underperformed. Jennison, which has a bias towards growth names, delivered a return three times higher than the yardstick it tries to beat.

Tastes shift, and if the Fed is nearing the peak of its interest rate boosting cycle, then these trends could reverse. Other factors that weighed on Witan's performance this year might prove longer lasting, like its largest exposure, GMO Climate Change Fund. Weakening energy prices and doubts over commodity demand in light of a shakier Chinese economy, have hindered returns. Witan has no plans to reduce this holding, which is 6.2 per cent of assets, pinning its hopes on the longer term climate transition and a bias in GMO for favouring value in a sector prone to hype.

Witan would hardly be the first not to fully capture the rally in US markets this year, given just seven stocks are responsible for nearly all the gains. So far this year, the value of its assets has risen 8.4 per cent, roughly in line with the benchmark. But over the longer term, returns have been relatively pedestrian, at 130 per cent over a ten-year period versus 140 per cent by the benchmark. Backing many managers has tempered volatility, but it hasn't delivered any knockout performance.

ADVICE Hold
WHY Relative performance not good enough to justify buying

NEWS IN BRIEF

Smith ticks the boxes

Companies are gradually getting back to buying boxes, DS Smith said yesterday as the packaging supplier reassured investors in a trading update. The FTSE 100 supplier of boxes for Tesco, Nestlé, and Amazon saw a reduction in like-for-like performance in corrugated box volumes as the pandemic delivery boom abated. But Miles Roberts, the chief executive, said there had been an improvement in the rate of decline and that higher prices and cost-cutting measures had allowed trading to continue in line with expectations.

Lidl's super warehouse

Lidl has opened its largest warehouse yet, in Bedfordshire. The 1.2 million sq ft, £300 million distribution centre near Luton is expected to service 150 stores and create up to 1,500 jobs. The retailer said it would be the first Lidl GB warehouse to feature automation. Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, said: "It's fantastic to see Lidl investing in the UK and creating thousands more well-paid jobs … businesses can be confident that investing in the UK is the right decision."

New competition chief

Didier Reynders, the EU justice chief, has been appointed to head the European Commission's competition portfolio after Margrethe Vestager announced that she is a candidate for the presidency of the European Investment Bank. Vestager was known for hefty fines meted out to multinational technology companies for anti-competitive practices. She had been in her post since 2014 and was due to complete a second five-year term late next year.

Hunt's autumn forecast

The chancellor will set out his autumn statement on November 22 and has commissioned an Office for Budget Responsibility forecast, which will be presented alongside the statement. Jeremy Hunt has faced pressure from some Tory MPs for tax cuts ahead of the next general election, expected in the second half of next year, but he and Rishi Sunak have resisted these calls, pointing to efforts to curb inflation and ensure financial stability.

PRICES

Major indices

New York	
Dow Jones	34641.97 (-195.74)
Nasdaq Composite	14020.95 (-10.86)
S&P 500	4496.83 (-18.94)
Tokyo	
Nikkei 225	33036.76 (+97.58)
Hong Kong	
Hang Seng	18456.91 (-387.25)
Amsterdam	
AEX Index	747.11 (-0.32)
Sydney	
AO	7516.80 (-8.90)
Frankfurt	
DAX	15771.71 (-53.14)
Singapore	
Straits	3226.83 (-12.14)
Brussels	
BEL20	3652.31 (-4.39)
Paris	
CAC-40	7254.72 (-24.79)
Zurich	
SMI Index	10958.90 (-94.69)
DJ Euro Stoxx 50	4269.16 (-10.71)
London	
FTSE 100	7437.93 (-14.83)
FTSE 250	18491.42 (-32.72)
FTSE 350	4096.14 (-8.04)
FTSE Eurotop 100	3596.38 (-4.18)
FTSE All-Shares	4055.78 (-7.92)
FTSE Non Financials	4948.37 (-8.78)
techMARK 100	6303.94 (-36.18)
Bargains	n/a
US$	1.2570 (-0.0051)
Euro	1.1721 (+0.0025)
£:SDR	0.98 (+0.00)
Exchange Index	82.31 (+0.11)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
CPI	130.90 Jul (2015 = 100)
RPI	374.20 Jul (Jan 1987 = 100)
RPIX	290.10 Jun (Jan 1987 = 100)
Morningstar Long Commodity	677.16 (+5.72)
Morningstar Long/Short Commod	4703.45 (+27.75)

London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	SEP 23	93.620	93.630	93.620	93.840	175	2142
	Dec 23	94.240	94.550	93.650	93.930	219005	519528
3-Mth Sterling	Sep 23						
	Dec 23						
	Mar 24						
	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
3-Mth Euribor	Sep 23	96.180	96.195	96.175	96.185	168860	624958
	Dec 23	96.120	96.140	96.120	96.135	128865	607269
	Mar 24	96.200	96.215	96.190	96.210	96311	508627
	Jun 24	96.370	96.390	96.360	96.375	88219	472060
	Sep 24	96.575	96.605	96.570	96.580	64072	219121
3-Mth Euroswiss	Sep 23						
	Dec 23						
	Mar 24						
	Jun 24						
FTSE100	Sep 23	7468.0	7493.0	7398.5	7447.5	83317	555650
	Dec 23	7459.0	7550.0	7459.0	7506.0	1826	1253
FTSEurofirst 80	Sep 23				5774.5		
	Dec 23				5801.5		

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Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 7.30pm)

Crude Oils ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	90.84	+0.44
BFOE(Nov)	90.10	+1.03
BFOE(Dec)	89.43	+1.10
WTI(Nov)	86.01	+1.26
WTI(Dec)	85.21	+1.31

Products ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

Premium Unld	1001.00	1004.00	+11.00
Gasoil EEC	967.75	968.75	+29.00
3.5 Fuel Oil	553.00	554.00	+21.00
Naphtha	681.00	695.00	+8.00

ICE Futures

Gas Oil

Sep	957.25-956.75	Dec	876.00-875.75
Oct	943.00-942.50	Jan	860.25-859.50
Nov	910.50-910.25		Volume: 688612

Brent (9.00pm)

Nov	90.91-90.90	Feb	88.54-88.51
Dec	90.15-90.13	Mar	87.84-87.80
Jan	89.32-89.31		Volume: 2337404

LIFFE

Cocoa

Sep	2980-2882	Dec	2719-2716
Dec	2961-2958	Mar	2672-2598
Mar	2923-2920	May	2409-2588
May	2857-2854		
Jul	2798-2750		
Sep	2790-2752		Volume: 78307

RobustaCoffee

Sep	2636-2630	May	2303-2283
Nov	2460-2458	Jul	2315-2271
Jan	2372-2368		
Mar	2345-2285		Volume: 18613

White Sugar (FOB)

Reuters		May	702.40-701.60
		Aug	672.00-668.40
Oct	745.40-744.20	Oct	642.00-639.00
Dec	733.60-727.20	Dec	637.10-600.00
Mar	725.30-722.60		Volume: 81551

SHUTTERSTOCK



Markets bet against CMC as retail punters leave



***Jessica Newman* Market report**

Though shares in CMC Markets are trading at their cheapest price in four years, it does not mean investors should be hunting for a bargain. Instead they should do anything but, according to analysts at Shore Capital, who declared the FTSE 250 stock as "uninvestable" yesterday until they see a "sustained improvement in revenue trajectory."

Subdued market conditions and the costly diversification of the financial betting group, founded by the former Conservative co-treasurer Lord Cruddas, led to two bleak trading updates in July and August. In its most recent update CMC warned that revenues would be lower than the City expected because of fewer retail punters speculating on markets. Vivek Raja, a Shore Capital analyst, aired his frustrations about the group's poor management of forecast expectations over the past year, arguing that "for an operationally geared business model, the negative impact on earnings has been dramatic". The downgrade prompted Raja and his team to slash their full-year pre-tax profit forecasts by nearly 60 per cent to £22.7 million and cut total revenue estimates to £275.5 million.

Investors followed Raja's advice and sold, causing the shares to fall a further 4p, or 3.8 per cent, to 102½p.

London's wider stock fell as investors digested disappointing economic data from China with the commodity-focused FTSE 100 sliding 14.83 points, or 0.2 per cent, to 7,437.93 while the FTSE 250 lost 32.72 points, or 0.2 per cent, to 18,491.42. The biggest drag on the senior index was **B&M European Value Retail**, which gave up 19¼p, or 3.4 per cent, to 547¾p after JP Morgan downgraded its recommendation on the discounter to "underweight". Analysts at the US investment bank were also not fond of **Tesco**, which they downgraded to "neutral" as they argued investment in gross margins would be needed to defend market share. The grocer shed 7½p, or 2.8 per cent, to close at 256¼p.

Data from Barclays showing growth in consumer card spending lost pace last month also soured sentiment towards other retailers including **Ocado**, which fell by 21p, or 2.4 per cent, to 857¾p; **Kingfisher** by 4¼p, or 1.8 per cent, to 227¾p; and **Marks & Spencer** by 3¼p, or 1.4 per cent, to 223¾p. Helping to cap losses on the Footsie were **BP**, which flowed 9¾p, or 2 per cent, higher to 511½p, and **Shell**, up 24½p, or 1 per cent, to £24.69, as oil prices rose after Saudi Arabia and Russia announced a fresh extension to voluntary supply cuts.

A drop in the value of the pound, which slipped against the dollar after a survey showed business activity in Britain contracted last month, gave a lift to the dollar earnings of blue chips such as the hotel group **IHG**, which gained 86p, or 1.4 per cent, to £60.68. Investors rushed to buy **Trainline**'s shares on advice from Canaccord Genuity, which reckons the online ticket seller will "see a re-acceleration in growth" — sending the shares 12¼p, or 5.2 per cent, higher to 248¾p.

Craneware was among the biggest movers down on Aim, rising 115p, or 8.3 per cent, to £15 after the healthcare software provider reported strong results. There was also applause for **Midwich Group**, the supplier of TV and sound systems, which reported a 50 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £15.6 million in the six months to the end of June. The shares finished the day 13p, or 3.3 per cent, higher at 404p. By contrast, a profit warning from **LendInvest** pushed shares in the property finance firm down 3½p, or 6.9 per cent, to 47p, while **Shearwater**, a cybersecurity group, shed 3p, or 6.2 per cent, to 45½p after the group swung into a £9.6 million pre-tax loss last year.

Wall Street report

Indices were lower after Monday's Labor day holiday as hopes that rates may have peaked gave way to fears of one more rise on the back of a big jump in oil prices. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 195.74 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 34,641.97.

SERVICES

Johnson cleans up with £215m

Bosses at Johnson Service Group have told the City that its full-year performance will exceed market expectations as strong trading in the first six months of the year pushed revenues and profits higher.

The Aim-listed laundry specialist reported a 22 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £215 million in the six months to June 30, which was attributed to the return to "normal and predictable trading patterns" alongside improved efficiency and pricing. The rise in sales contributed to pre-tax profits rising to £13.5 million, against £5.1 million in that period last year.



The laundry specialist expects to exceed market expectations

"Recognising the volumes processed over the busy summer months, improving efficiencies and a somewhat more predictable outlook on the cost base, together with our assumption that the trading environment remains unchanged, we expect the full year outturn to be slightly ahead of the guidance provided in our July update," said Peter Egan, chief executive at Johnson Service Group.

The interim dividend rose to 0.9p a share with a further £10 million share buyback. The shares, which have climbed more than 45 per cent since the start of the year, closed up 14p, or 11.3 per cent, at 138p last night.

Rights deal is a hit with investors

Investors gave a warm welcome to news that London-listed One Media IP Group had bought the licenser's income share of the Entertain ME catalogue of more than 15,000 songs.

The company said the catalogue, which covers songs from the 1940s to the 1970s from artists such as Dean Martin, Gloria Gaynor, above, James Brown and Judy Garland would provide an instant boost to revenue. Shares in One Media rose 13.6 per cent, or 0.75p, to close at 6.25p after the announcement, valuing the company at £14 million.

Michael Infante, chief executive of One Media, said: "This acquisition not only gives us income exposure to new songs in our sweet spot of music nostalgia, it also allows us to consolidate certain income streams where we also have a portfolio exposure to some of the tracks in the Entertain Me catalogue."

One Media said the purchase of rights is on an in-perpetuity basis and the deal supports its strategy of "owning and managing music rights that have a proven track record of delivering long term, recurring income".

The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Trainline Canaccord Genuity starts coverage with "buy" rating	5.2%
John Wood Group Oil prices rise as Saudi Arabia and Russia extend supply cuts	4.9%
BP Jump in oil prices	2%
Caledonia Investments Sells majority stake in 7IM for $321.5 million	1.8%
IHG Benefits from a weaker pound	1.4%
Anglo American Weaker metal prices	-1.6%
Ocado Retailers out of favour as consumer spending slowed last month	-2.4%
Ashtead Group Cuts UK sales forecasts	-2.9%
B&M European Value Retail JP Morgan cuts to "underweight"	-3.4%
CMC Markets Shore Capital cuts to "sell"	-3.8%

London Grain Futures

LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)

Nov	185.30	Jan	unq	Mar	unq
May	197.00	Jul	unq	Volume: 754	

London Metal Exchange (Official)

	Cash	3mth	Dec 22
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	8425.0-8430.0	8429.0-8430.0	8505.0-8515.0
Lead ($/tonne)	2273.0-2274.0	2219.0-2220.0	2227.0-2232.0
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	2455.0-2456.0	2474.0-2476.0	2505.0-2510.0
Alum Hi Gde ($/tonne)	2136.0-2136.5	2188.0-2188.5	2333.0-2338.0
Nickel ($/tonne)	20795.0-20800.0	20955.0-20960.0	22045.0-22095.0
Tin ($/tonne) (15mth)	26350.0-26400.0	26410.0-26420.0	26070.0-26120.0

Gold/Precious metals (US dollars per ounce)

Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Friday.

Bullion: Open $1937.43

Close $1926.49-1926.71 **High** $1938.78

Low $1925.45

AM $1942.05 **PM** $1937.20

Platinum $ (£)

Silver $23.61 (£18.77)

Palladium $ (£)

European money deposits %

Currency	1mth	3mth	6mth	12mth
Dollar	0.13	0.20	0.29	0.55
Sterling	4.20	5.58	4.74	0.81
Euro	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.50

Money rates %

Base Rates Clearing Banks 5.25 ECB Refi 4.25 US Fed Fund 5.25-5.50

Halifax Mortgage Rate (SVR) 8.74

Sterling spot and forward rates

Mkt Rates for	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	8.6892-8.7442	8.7367-8.7417	162ds	463ds
Euro	1.1732-1.1660	1.1724-1.1723	13pr	37pr
Montreal	1.7100-1.7192	1.7110-1.7112	6ds	22ds
New York	1.2529-1.2631	1.2575-1.2576	1pr	1pr
Oslo	13.414-13.516	13.453-13.460	123ds	331ds
Stockholm	13.880-13.973	13.948-13.953	224ds	583ds
Tokyo	184.07-185.77	185.65-185.67	96ds	267ds
Zurich	1.1124-1.1186	1.1179-1.1184	38ds	107ds

Premium = pr Discount = ds

Dollar rates

Australia	1.5667-1.5669
Canada	1.3606-1.3607
Denmark	6.9491-6.9496
Euro	0.9323-0.9323
Hong Kong	7.8399-7.8400
Japan	147.63-147.64
Malaysia	4.6425-4.6475
Norway	10.698-10.703
Singapore	1.3603-1.3604
Sweden	11.092-11.094
Switzerland	0.8892-0.8893

Other Sterling

Argentina peso	440.13-440.16
Australia dollar	1.9701-1.9705
Bahrain dinar	0.4709-0.4780
Brazil real	6.2446-6.2484
Euro	1.1723-1.1725
Hong Kong dollar	9.8583-9.8594
India rupee	104.41-104.42
Indonesia rupiah	19227-19228
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3871-0.3894
Malaysia ringgit	5.8277-5.8340
New Zealand dollar	2.1376-2.1381
Singapore dollar	1.7105-1.7108
S Africa rand	24.130-24.141
U A E dirham	4.6207-4.6211

Exchange rates

	Bid	Change
Australia $	1.969	+0.02
Canada $	1.712	
Denmark Kr	8.739	+0.02
Euro €	1.172	
Hong Kong $	9.842	-0.04
Hungary	455.089	+7.17
Indonesia	19164.375	-63.97
Israel Shk	4.771	-0.04
Japan Yen	185.410	+0.64
New Zealand $	2.136	+0.01
Norway Kr	13.498	+0.05
Poland	5.272	+0.04
Russia	123.002	+0.87
S Africa Rd	24.191	+0.15
Sweden Kr	13.972	+0.07
Switzerland Fr	1.116	
Turkey Lira	33.643	-0.14
USA $	1.255	-0.01

Rates supplied by Morningstar

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Business Equity prices

Dividend yields Please note that the information in the dividend yields column has been suspended due to technical problems at Morningstar, the provider.
12-month high and low High/low prices for UK equities are based on closing prices. Investment trust high and low prices are based on intra-day figures.

Automobiles & parts

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
395⅜	89½	Aston Martin Lag	347	+ ⅛	...	-2.0

Banking & finance

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
236⅝	133	**Abrdn**‡	161	- 2¾	...	3.5
9¾	6⅛	Acuity RM♦	7⅜	- ⅛	...	...
2467	1881½	**Admiral**	2394	+ 23	...	12.2
49¾	16	ADVFN♦	16	- 1½	...	2.8
390	255⅛	AJ Bell	289¾	+ 2⅛	...	27.1
27242⅛	21139½	Aon Corpn	26385	- 246⅛	...	64.3
1075	645	Arbuthnot Bkg♦‡	955	- 5	...	21.1
12½	7½	Argo Group♦	7½	...	...	3.4
286⅜	180⅞	Ashmore	192¼	+ 1½	...	6.5
1327¾	1138¾	Aus New Z	1279½	+ ½	...	9.9
462⅜	369⅝	**Aviva**‡	371½	- 1¼	...	48.8
341½	205	Banco Santander	297	- 8	...	7.0
3635	1944	Bank of Georgia	3470	+ 10	...	10.7
189⅝	133⅞	**Barclays**‡	149⅝	- 1⅛	...	3.6
¼	...	Blue Star Capital♦	...	...	...	2.3
418	283	BP Marsh&Ptnrs♦	357	- 8	...	9.8
15⅛	6¾	Braveheart Inv♦	12¼	...	...	0.3
515	512	Brewin Dolphin	515	+ 1	...	28.1
303⅜	166⅞	Bridgepoint‡	174⅞	+ ⅛	...	10.9
61½	24½	Cenkos Secs♦‡	29	+ 2½	...	5.9
325	262½	Chesnara	272	- ½	...	15.1
52¾	9	City of Lon Gp♦	10	+ 1	...	-0.6
470	343½	City Lon Inv Gp	393	- 7	...	9.2
1131	796½	Close Bros	814½	- 7½	...	6.0
268	102⅜	CMC Markets	102⅜	- 4	...	3.1
1023	561½	Commerzbk	819¼	- 53⅛	...	42.0
1056⅞	650⅜	Deutsche Bk	832⅜	- 25⅜	...	9.7
235¼	133⅞	Direct Line Ins	154	+ 1⅞	...	6.3
77	44⅛	EFG-Hermes Hldg	48½	- 3⅛	...	3.1
195	122½	EPE Special Opps♦	152½	...	...	8.5
1214⅛	839⅜	FBD	1104½	...	...	4.9
70	65	Fiske♦	65	...	...	11.5
75	53½	Frenkel Topping♦	58½	+ ½	...	34.0
972	602	Georgia Capital	972	- 3	...	2.6
1065	670	Gresham House♦	1060	...	...	42.5
506	394	H&T Group♦	409	...	...	13.1
55½	33	Hansard Global	41⅞	...	...	14.4
949½	740¾	**Hargreaves Lansdown**	754⅜	- 12	...	13.4
175	117½	Helios Under♦	127½	...	...	...
654⅞	442⅛	**HSBC**‡	587½	+ 1⅝	...	12.8
836½	632½	IG Group	668	- 6½	...	6.8
883	500	Impax♦	523	- 1	...	17.2
1511½	953⅛	Intermed Capital	1349	+ 3	...	7.7
128	64⅜	IPF‡	121	+ 3	...	6.8
168	121½	International Public P'ship	129	- ⅜	...	16.5
546⅜	351½	Investec	464⅜	- 3⅜	...	11.6
340	253	Investment Co	335	...	...	12.0
75⅜	52	IP Group	57½	+ 1	...	2.1
195	94	Jarvis Securities♦‡	105	- 2½	...	7.5
151	83¾	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	98⅛	- ¼	...	3.6
95¼	55⅞	Just Group‡	75⅝	+ 2	...	...
664	461¾	Lancashire Holdings‡	584½	+ 13½	...	...
265¾	204	**Legal & Gen**‡	216	- ¼	...	6.6
...	...	Liberty Group	502⅝	- 2⅝	...	...
1290	587½	Liontrust	640	- 6	...	8.0
54	31	Livermore Invs♦	36½	...	...	2.3
53⅞	39	**Lloyds Banking Group**‡	41¾	- ⅛	...	5.8
32½	19½	LMS Capital‡	19½	...	...	8.4
8774	7104	**Lond Stk Ex Gp**‡	8158	- 10	...	83.4
219¼	159⅞	**M&G**	191	+ ⅝	...	59.6
286¾	202	Man‡	205½	- 3⅜	...	8.2
29	8¼	Manx Fin♦	21½	+ ½	...	10.9
2¾	1	Marechale Cap♦	1¾	...	...	0.8
15515¾	11772¾	Marsh McLn	15455⅜	- 138⅛	...	32.2
670	530	Mattioli Woods♦	590	...	...	...
19½	7½	Metal Tiger♦	9	+ ¾	...	3.5
153⅛	69	Metro Bank	100½	+ 1¼	...	-0.7
1673¼	1285⅞	Nat Aust Bk	1472⅞	+ 3	...	14.6
309⅞	212⅜	**NatWest**‡	230	- 3	...	9.0
341	170⅜	Numis♦	334½	+ 1	...	6.8
568½	330¾	Onesavings Bank‡	330¾	- 4⅛	...	4.4
626	377½	PayPoint‡	546	+ 2	...	17.1
3⅛	¼	PCF Group♦	⅞	+ ¼	...	-0.4
647	504¾	**Phoenix**	513⅜	- 2⅜	...	-5.9
1371½	797½	**Prudential**	954¾	- 14¾	...	15.5
2¼	⅞	Quantum Blockchain♦	1¼	...	...	-7.2
109⅜	71¼	Quilter‡	85⅜	+ ¾	...	61.0
100½	44	Randall & Quilter♦	55	+ 1	...	81.9
2220	1570	Rathbone Grp	1728	+ 6	...	13.3
¾	½	RiverFort Global Opps♦	⅝	...	...	1.8
2050	1395	Rockwood Strategic	1835	- 25	...	2.6
2570	1905	S & U	2230	+ 5	...	10.5
1¾	⅜	Sancus Lending Grp♦	⅝	...	...	-0.3
51⅞	40	Schroder REIT	41	+ ⅜	...	4.3
506¾	358¾	**Schroders**‡	411¼	- ½	...	1.8
1304½	850⅜	**St James Place**‡	874	- 3	...	16.6
790¾	519½	**Stand Chart**‡	703½	- 5¾	...	15.7
8½	6½	Starvest♦	6½	- ½	...	-1.0
55	24½	STM Group♦‡	45	...	...	17.3
4061⅜	3148	Sun Life Can	3888	- 7	...	9.9
9	5½	Tavistock Inv♦	5½	...	...	0.9
2850	1634	TBC Bank Group	2820	...	...	8.2
12¼	3½	Tern♦	4⅜	- ⅛	...	3.2
57	48	Thames Ventures VCT‡	48	...	...	6.4
29¼	15¼	Time Finance♦	26¼	...	...	16.0
243¾	103	Vanquis‡	107	+ ⅜	...	2.0
1245	900	Volvere♦	1155	...	...	...
34½	7	WH Ireland♦	7	...	...	3.9
30½	23	Walker Crips Grp	23	...	...	65.7
3827⅜	2859⅛	Wells Fargo	3300	- 17½	...	9.0
1252⅛	1023¾	Westpac	1093⅛	- 15⅛	...	14.8
31	21½	Worsley Investors Ltd	27⅞	...	...	87.1
40912⅝	34801⅛	Zurich Fincl	37040½	+ 107⅜	...	14.4

Investment companies

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	Dis(-) or Pm
2036	1044½	**3I Group**	1983½	- 18½	...	9.8
346	276⅝	3i Infrastructure	303	- ½	...	-9.4
1428	1066	Aberforth Smlr	1218	+ 2	...	-13.8
99⅜	78	abrdnDivInc&Grwth	83	- 2½	...	-24.8
1057½	884	Alliance	1048	...	...	-6.1
457	338¼	Asia Dragon Tr	359	- 1	...	-16.8
220	171½	Athelney Trust	195	...	...	-6.2
206½	171¾	AVI Global Trust	198	+ ⅛	...	-11.0
330	206¼	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	218½	- ½	...	-13.4
102⅛	73½	BaillieGifford Eu Gr	87⅜	- ⅜	...	-14.1
829	692	Baillie Gifford JpnTr	741	...	...	-7.1
163¾	125⅜	Baillie Gifford SN	136	+ 1½	...	-13.2
180¾	139⅜	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	158½	- 1	...	-13.9
102	64	Bal Comm Prop	68⅝	- ⅜	...	-41.0
107	90⅞	Bankers Inv Trst	97½	+ ¼	...	-13.4
5232	334	BH Macro	349	- 2	...	-11.5
1048	745⅜	Biotech Growth	799	+ 6	...	-7.9
149½	108	BlckRck Com Inc	118¾	+ ¾	...	-10.2
148	123	BlckRck Fro Inv	144½	+ 1	...	-8.6
566	396	BlckRck Grt Euro	527	+ 2	...	-6.3
206	164	BlckRck Inc & Gwth	181	- 3	...	-9.6
449	331½	BlckRck Latin Am	393½	- 1½	...	-14.9
1450	1162	BlckRck Smlr	1278	+ 6	...	-13.2
215	178	BlckRck Sustain Amer	182¼	...	...	-8.3
670	477⅞	BlckRck Throgmorton	561	...	...	-8.2
774	538	BlckRck Wld Min	596	- 4	...	-2.6
1321⅜	1115	Brown Adv US sm	1157½	+ 2½	...	-19.5
1115	888	Brunner	1070	...	...	-12.4
4065	3015	Caledonia Inv	3445	+ 60	...	-32.8
432	366½	City of Lon IT	390	- 1	...	1.4
121	60⅛	Crystal Amber Fd♦	63	...	...	-35.0
534	384	CT Priv Eq Ord	509	- 5	...	-24.2
96	72	CT Property	73½	- 1¼	...	-14.5
317	256	CT UK Cap&Inc	283	- ½	...	-4.4
93	77	CT UK HIT B	80	...	...	-6.2
89	71	CT UK HIT	81¼	+ ¾	...	-5.6
356	294	CT UK HIT UNIT	315	...	...	-7.6
590	476	Dunedin Entp	560	...	...	-9.6
690	537	Edinburgh IT	649	- 1	...	-9.6
195⅜	135⅛	Edin Wwide	151¾	- 1	...	-16.5
336	271	EP Global Opp	291	- 1	...	-18.7
97¾	74½	European Assets	87½	- ⅞	...	-8.2
817	608	European Opp Trust	798	- 9	...	-10.0
992	825⅝	**F&C Invest Tr**	868	- 3	...	-11.1
536	413½	Fidlty Asian Val	522	...	...	-5.2
299⅜	181⅞	Fidelity China Sp	214	- 1½	...	-11.2
649⅞	552⅝	FdltyEmrgMkt	594	- 1⅝	...	-14.5
362	258½	Fidelity European Trust	350	...	...	-4.5
187	154	Fidlty Jap Tru	169½	+ 1	...	-12.0
293½	232	Fidlty Spec Val	266	- 2½	...	-8.4
923	760⅛	Fins Gwth & Inc	866	- 1	...	-4.4
108⅛	68⅛	GCP Infrastructure	74½	- 1	...	-31.0
39	24	Gldn Prosp Prc Mtl	27½	- ¼	...	-17.3
168½	130⅜	Greencoat UK Wind	138¼	- 1½	...	-15.3
201¼	161	Hansa Investment	181½	+ ½	...	-43.2
193⅞	160	Hansa Inv Co 'A'	182	...	...	-42.6
2450	1900	Hbrvest Glbl Pt Eq	2300	- 25	...	-39.8
166¾	120½	Hend Euro Foc	162¾	+ ¼	...	-10.0
181	137¼	Hend High Inc	160¾	+ ¼	...	-2.0
907	674¼	Hend Smlr	710	- 4	...	-13.3
1966	1540	Herald	1768	- 8	...	-14.5
419⅝	316	HgCapital Trust	379	- 3	...	-18.5
179	119⅝	HICL Infra	128½	- ½	...	-21.3
500	216	Highbridge Tactical	425	...	...	61.1
1223¾	928	ICG Ent Tr	1144	+ 10	...	-39.3
462½	373⅛	Impax Env Mkts	394	- 4½	...	-5.6
374	280	Invesco Asia Tr	323½	- 6½	...	-9.4
173	141	Invesco Bond Inc	161½	- 2	...	2.1
155⅜	111	IPST Bal	118	- 1	...	-22.0
258½	200	IPST Gbl Eq	244	...	...	-12.8
101	88	IPST Managed	93½	...	...	-14.9
177	141	IPST UK Eq	157¼	- 2¾	...	-10.7
478	373½	IP UKSmallerCos	415½	- 1½	...	-8.7
814	657½	JPM American	807	- 2	...	-1.0
402¼	294½	JPM Asia Gro & Inc	350	- 1	...	-9.0
419	237½	JPM China	255½	- 2	...	-11.0
722	624	JPM Claverhs	654	...	...	-4.9
804	514	JPMorgan Emerg E & ME & Africa	648	- 1¾	...	177.0
120⅜	91	JPM Em Mkts	106½	- ⅜	...	-7.3
449	339	JPM Euro disc	384	- 3½	...	-13.1
142½	108	JPM GEMI	127	- ½	...	-10.9
481	394	JPM GG&I	472	+ 2	...	1.1
898	764	JPM Indian	846	+ 8	...	-18.7
347	297	JPM Jap Sml Co	318	+ 2	...	-13.1
521	416	JPM Japan	484½	+ ½	...	-8.0
974¾	735	JPM Mid Cap	886	+ 10	...	-14.5
98	85¼	JPM Multi-asset G&I	91¾	...	...	-4.5
303	230	JPM Smllr Co	263	...	...	-13.8
228½	180½	Keystone Positive Change Inv plc	211½	...	...	-15.4
871	649	Law Debenture	803	...	...	1.9
135	99	Lowland	111¼	+ ¼	...	-13.8
223	156¾	Majedie	183¾	...	...	-25.1
358	272⅛	M Currie Port	331	- 2	...	-1.7
104½	85	Marwyn Val In	91½	...	...	-45.6
222	158¼	Mercantile IT	197⅛	- 1	...	-13.7
606	480	Merchants	535	...	...	0.8
733¾	639¾	Mid Wynd	711	+ 2	...	-2.5
1073	906	Monks Inv Tst	967	+ 2	...	-14.8
151⅛	104⅛	Montanaro Eur Sml	127⅜	- 1⅛	...	-12.6
886	715	Murray Income Trust	812	- 6	...	-8.6
275¾	225½	Murray Int	241	- 1½	...	-6.7
80⅜	70⅛	Nb Global Floating	73⅜	+ 1¼	...	-9.6
384	326	Pacific Assets	364	...	...	-6.9
285	229⅛	Pantheon Int	283	- ½	...	-37.3
3115	2565	**Pershing Sq**	3016	- 4	...	-34.5
492	458⅞	Personal Assets	465	- 1½	...	-0.7
2340	1697½	Polar Cap Tech	2285	+ 25	...	-14.2
197	115¼	Prem Glb & Inf	121	...	...	-10.3
148⅛	103½	Renewables Inf	107¾	- ⅜	...	-17.8
2400	1784	RIT Cap Ptnr	1916	+ 2	...	-20.3
736	510	Riverstone	604	+ 5	...	-53.5
457	366½	Schroder TotRt	404	- 2	...	-6.1
549¾	446	Schrd Asia Pac	491½	- 2½	...	-11.6
324	254½	Schrod Inc Gwth	267	...	...	-9.2
238	190	Schrod Jap Gwth	235	- 2	...	-9.0
626	454	Schrod UKMid	536	+ 1	...	-14.1
19⅛	11½	Schroder UK PP Tr	12⅞	- ⅛	...	-50.7
543	434	Scot American	505	- 5	...	1.5
856¾	604¾	**Scot Mtge**	690⅜	- ¾	...	-19.2
239¼	205	Secs Tst Scot	218	- 1	...	-1.0
94¾	71	Sequoia Eco	83	- ⅛	...	-10.6
249½	195⅛	Temple Bar	228½	+ ½	...	-6.4
166	130	Tplton Emg Mkt	149⅛	- ¾	...	-13.4
162¾	122	The Glbl Smaller	143⅛	- ¾	...	-13.8
¼	...	Tiger Royal and Inv♦	⅛	...	...	66.6
362½	254	TR Property	282	- ½	...	-8.5
74	64⅜	Troy Inc&Gth	69⅛	- ⅜	...	-1.4
200	122	Utilico Ord	133	- 3	...	-33.6
234	197½	Utilico Emerging Mkt	218	- 1	...	-15.0
712	500	Vietnam Ent Inv	616	- 2	...	-16.3
237	199¾	Witan	224	...	...	-10.5
349½	296	Ww Health	311	+ 3	...	-10.1



Construction & property

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
183½	135	Alumasc♦	158½	+ 6	...	8.0
11	8⅝	Aseana Props	9⅞	+ ¾	...	-4.9
64¾	43⅛	Assura	45¼	- ⅛	...	9.0
2¾	1¾	Aukett Swanke♦	1¾	...	...	-2.6
393⅜	294½	Balfour Beatty	321	- 2⅜	...	15.2
506⅜	323⅜	**Barratt Devs**	443¼	- 5	...	6.9
2500	1586½	Bellway	2114	+ 4	...	6.3
4504	3165	**Berkeley**‡	4009	- 11	...	10.4
1290	987	Big Yellow Group	1053	- 5	...	6.9
455	181½	Billington Hldgs♦	350	...	...	28.4
281	200	Boot (Henry)	204	- 1	...	10.9
471⅜	297¼	Br Land	311¾	+ 1⅝	...	42.7
167½	120	Caledonian Tst♦	160	...	...	31.9
61⅜	43¼	Cap & Regnl‡	60	+ 1⅛	...	-0.5
2550	2350	Cardiff Prop	2450	...	...	26.6
25	1¾	Carecapital♦#	1⅞	...	...	-0.2
155	106	Clarke T‡	134½	+ 2¼	...	9.6
261	191⅝	Countryside Partner	229¾	+ 14	...	16.7
27½	5⅞	Craven House♦	13½	...	...	-0.2
4674	2858½	**CRH**	4430	- 74	...	18.4
2726	1812	Derwent London	1838	+ 4	...	8.1
4½	3⅛	Dolphin Capital♦	4½	...	...	-3.1
29	19¼	First Prop♦	19¼	- ¼	...	...
45½	34½	Fletcher King♦	36½	+ 2	...	...
42	27¼	Foxtons Group‡	37	...	...	...
210	145	Galliford Try	195	- 1⅜	...	43.3
357½	252½	Genuit Group‡	319	- 2½	...	19.3
490	335	Gleeson (MJ)	371	- 14	...	5.8
988⅝	630½	Grafton	878½	+ 9⅝	...	10.1
275⅛	205⅜	Grainger	232	- ⅛	...	14.4
603½	382¾	Great Portland	412¾	+ 2¾	...	-5.1
30½	17⅛	Hammerson‡	24¼	- ⅛	...	-2.6
138½	101	Harworth Gp	108	- 2	...	3.7
630	400	Heath (Samuel)♦‡	400	...	...	8.2
389	225	Helical PLC	229	- 1½	...	5.5
1025	750	Highcroft Invs	775	...	...	3.3
201⅛	135¾	Ibstock‡	145	- 1	...	18.8
224	176	James Halstead♦	201	+ 3	...	21.4
856	591	Keller‡	775	- 3	...	9.0
6511¾	3844	Kingspan Group	6214⅛	- 221⅞	...	24.4
743⅛	485¼	**Land Sec**‡	575	- 7¾	...	...
93⅞	58	Life Science Reit	64½	- ⅜	...	...
22	10½	Lon & Assoc	10¾	...	...	-1.4
212½	161¾	Londonmetric Property‡	173⅛	- 1¾	...	3.6
62	45¼	Macau Prop Op	51¼	...	...	-6.6
366½	225⅜	Marshalls	270	- 2⅜	...	9.8
101	74	Michelmersh♦	89	+ 1½	...	14.1
1960	1392	Morgan Sindall	1960	+ 2	...	9.5
12750	10550	Mountview	10650	- 50	...	13.2
94½	68¼	NewRiver REIT	80⅝	- 1½	...	-2.8
270	195	Palace Capital	252	+ 2	...	12.0
335	260	Panther Securities♦	285	+ 10	...	2.5
1531	968½	**Persimmon**	1043½	- 11	...	4.2
3⅝	1⅜	Pires Investments♦	1½	...	...	-3.3
65	30	Plaza Cent	30	...	...	...
138⅛	88¾	Primary Health Properties	92¾	...	...	9.4
35¼	28¼	Real Estate Invs♦	29½	...	...	3.8
545	372½	Redrow	466½	- 4⅜	...	5.7
1074	794	Safestore	855	+ 3	...	4.8
1055	763½	Savills‡	910	- 5	...	9.1
6¼	5⅜	Secure Property♦	5⅜	...	...	14.2
946½	694	**Segro**‡	715	- 5⅛	...	2.1
44⅜	27¾	SIG	34⅛	- ½	...	...
63	37⅜	SigmaRoc♦	53¾	- ⅛	...	...
91¾	66½	Sirius Real Estate	88⅜	+ ⅝	...	6.8
173½	160½	Smart (J)	166	...	...	4.5
50	27½	Steppe Cement♦	27½	...	...	6.3
128¼	85	**Taylor Wimpey**	113⅜	- ⅝	...	7.4
170½	121½	Town Centre	124	...	...	4.9
1082½	738	Travis Perkins	822½	- 12¾	...	8.0
170	123½	Tritax Big Box Reit	137½	...	...	2.4
82¾	50¾	Tritax Eurobox‡	52½	- ½	...	...
318	184½	Tyman‡	299½	- ½	...	11.8
1072	791½	**Unite**	914	- 9	...	10.6
851	519½	Vistry Group	781	- 4	...	6.8
157	77½	Warehouse REIT	82⅞	- 1	...	1.9
537	343⅜	Workspace Grp	485⅛	- 6½	...	-7.2
700	622½	Wynnstay Props♦	690	...	...	5.0

Consumer goods

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
5⅛	1	Agriterra♦	1¼	...	...	-0.1
39½	25½	Airea♦	31½	...	...	11.6
910	652	Anglo-Eastern	734	- 10	...	6.7
297½	147½	Animalcare♦	175	...	...	...
2114	1237	**AB Foods**	1994	+ 4½	...	32.9
121	82⅜	Bakkavor Group	99	+ 1	...	10.3
561	432	Barr (AG)	484	+ 2	...	17.1
3⅞	¾	Bidstack Group♦	¾	...	...	-0.6
43½	24½	Brand Architekts♦	28	...	...	-1.2
3509	2484½	**Brit Amer Tob**	2586½	+ 5	...	8.7
936	707½	Britvic	866	- 4½	...	19.6
2641	1636	**Burberry**	2188	- 12	...	18.8
183¾	123⅜	C&C Grp	133½	+ ⅜	...	-7.9
5½	1	Capital Metals♦	1	...	...	-0.2
149¾	92	Carr's Grp‡	129	...	...	15.9
525	255	Character Grp♦	271	+ 6	...	4.8
1640	1070	Churchill China♦	1305	+ 10	...	...
2565	1840	**Coca Cola HBC**	2210	- 18	...	17.6
840	610	Colefax♦	730	- 20	...	12.9
3400	2586	Cranswick	3358	+ 46	...	17.7
329	164	Devro	329	...	...	17.8
3857½	3147½	**Diageo**‡	3147½	- 34½	...	24.2
1¼	⅜	Distil♦	½	...	...	12.5
908	670	Evans (M.P.)♦	740	+ 2	...	6.3
103½	71	Finsbury Food♦	91½	...	...	10.8
11700	5690	Games Workshop‡	10580	- 160	...	29.1
1324⅛	899¼	Glanbia‡	1291⅜	...	...	31.8
92¼	60¾	Greencore	79⅛	- 1⅜	...	15.8
348	214	Headlam	229	+ 10	...	9.8
973	500	Hilton Food	678	+ 3	...	14.1
29	16¾	Hornby♦	16¾	+ ¾	...	79.7
2185	1695	**Imperial Brands**‡	1760½	- 7½	...	5.8
1½	1	J Lewis Hford♦	1¼	+ ¼	...	7.9
8675¾	6972⅛	Kerry Gp	7250⅛	- 42⅝	...	20.0
44⅜	19	McBride	38¾	+ ⅛	...	-6.9
295	205	Mulberry Group♦	205	- 5	...	8.4
1155	958	Nichols♦‡	1025	- 15	...	...
232	143	Norcros	150½	+ ½	...	4.7
372½	269¾	Origin Ents♦	290	...	...	9.1
11⅝	...	Pittards♦#	5⅜	+ 1	...	2.5
512½	282	Portmeirion♦	287	- 6	...	12.2
⅞	½	Provexis♦	⅝	...	...	0.3
221	153¾	PZ Cussons	156¾	- ⅛	...	18.0
125	50¾	REA	50¾	- 3¼	...	-4.0
2	⅞	Real Gd Fd♦	1⅛	...	...	0.1
320	200	Tandem♦	210	- 10	...	3.0
724	507	Treatt	538	- 7	...	21.6
3¼	1¾	Ukrproduct Gp♦	2½	+ ¼	...	-1.6
5051	4451	Unilever (NV)	...	...	...	...
4443½	3838	**Unilever**	3994½	- 31½	...	20.5
722	362	Victoria♦	548	+ 3	...	...

Engineering

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
...	...	Ass Br Eng#	15	...	...	-3.5
1200	647	Avon Rubber‡	647	- 3	...	...
394⅛	268½	Babcock	386¾	+ ¾	...	-2.3
1032	714	**BAE**	1010	+ 2½	...	18.4
2150	1200	Braime A N/V♦	1475	...	...	16.6
1850	1650	Braime Group♦	1850	+ 50	...	20.8
580	470	Caffyns	515	...	...	7.4
4½	1⅛	Cap XX Ld♦	1⅜	...	...	-3.1
419	279	Castings	344	+ 5	...	16.6
5	2⅞	Chamberlin♦	2⅞	...	...	-0.2
34	14	Checkit♦	26	...	...	-3.1
540	391	Cohort♦‡	505	...	...	44.8
400	244	Crestchic Plc♦	399	...	...	...
1335	815	Dewhurst♦	855	...	...	9.8
325	192¼	Dialight	215	...	...	...
1251¾	826¾	Electrolux 'B'	842⅜	- 6⅜	...	6.3
182½	85½	Feedback♦	90	+ 2½	...	...
664	426	Gooch Hsego♦	514	- 8	...	38.0
4800	2550	Goodwin	4740	+ 40	...	26.2
2498	1974	**Halma**	2151	+ 8	...	31.1
1810	893	Hill & Smith	1752	- 12	...	41.2
89	61	Holders Tech♦	61	...	...	3.7
2¼	¾	Image Scan♦	1¾	...	...	10.2
1680	1071	**IMI**‡	1498	- 4	...	20.4
...	...	Inspirit Energy♦	...	...	...	...
10200	6740	Judges Scientific♦	9200	+ 60	...	46.4
101½	72½	LPA♦	87½	- 1	...	...
798¾	798	Meggitt	798¾	+ ⅛	...	...
543⅛	200⅜	**Melrose**	505⅜	- 8	...	...
323½	217	Morgan Advanced	260	- ½	...	10.9
325	207	Mpac♦	207	- 3	...	5.4
745	317	MS Intl♦	700	- 25	...	...
2855	1720	Oxford Inst‡	2210	+ 5	...	30.1
1784⅛	1039¼	Philips El nv	...	...	...	...
15½	11¼	PipeHawk♦	11¼	...	...	24.1
72	23⅛	Pressure Tech♦	33½	...	...	-2.7
4232	3342	Renishaw	3578	+ 22	...	20.4
31	20½	Renold♦	31	+ ¼	...	11.0
219⅛	66⅛	**Rolls-Royce**	219⅛	- ⅝	...	...
1⅝	⅝	Ross Gp	⅝	...	...	-1.6
342⅛	229½	Rotork‡	305½	+ 3⅛	...	33.2
200	103½	SDI Group♦	103½	- 3½	...	17.0
181⅛	111	Senior	175½	- ¾	...	30.6
75	48	Severfield	67¾	...	...	12.1
14¼	2⅝	Six Hundred♦	2⅝	- ⅛	...	15.5
1556⅝	1048¼	SKF B	1292⅞	- 1⅜	...	9.5
300	225	Slingsby (HC)♦	265	- 25	...	4.3
1797½	1442½	**Smiths**	1635½	- 5	...	26.0
1435	986	Solid State♦	1310	...	...	31.5
450	257	Somero Enter♦	282	+ 2	...	6.2
3841	2690	Spectris	3261	- 18	...	10.7
12350	9702	**Spirax-Sarco**	9902	- 113	...	31.1
57	26½	Surface Trsfms♦	32	- 1	...	...
3⅝	2	Tanfield♦	3⅝	...	...	...
440	345½	Thorpe FW♦	380	- 5	...	26.4
2⅛	⅝	TP Group♦	2⅛	...	...	-3.3
102½	48½	Transense Tech♦	97½	...	...	71.6
...	...	Ultra Electrncs	3500	+ 6	...	37.4
454⅛	302⅛	Vesuvius‡	441	+ ½	...	11.7
1470	509	Videndum	560	+ 30	...	10.2
335	202	Volex♦	320	- 1½	...	17.4
2021	1394½	**Weir**	1896½	+ 32½	...	32.0
2680	1464	XP Power	2235	- 15	...	11.9
150	80	Zytronic♦	80	- 5	...	26.6

Health

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
1454	1103	Abcam♦	1226	+ 123	...	...
290½	179½	AdvancedMedical♦	179½	- 5⅜	...	28.2
19¾	⅞	Allergy Therap♦	2½	- ⅛	...	-3.0
74½	11	Angle♦	11¾	...	...	-1.6
575	178½	Anpario♦	215	+ 2½	...	11.3
12294	9656	**AstraZeneca**‡	10736	+ 46	...	...
248½	196⅝	**Convatec**‡	229⅜	- ½	...	53.5
43	25⅜	Creighton	30	+ 1½	...	5.7
3810	2520	Dechra Pharma	3808	- 2	...	56.8
1½	⅛	Deltex Medical♦	⅛	...	...	-1.0
23	10½	e-Therapeutics♦	16	+ ½	...	...
130	82½	Eco Animal Hlth♦	109	+ 1	...	13.2
51	24⅝	EKF Diagnostics♦	26	- ⅞	...	7.3
65	35¾	Futura Medical♦	50½	- ⅜	...	...
3272	2132	Genus	2268	- 34	...	40.3
1523	1296	**GSK**‡	1381⅜	+ 7¾	...	15.9
½	¼	Gunsynd♦	¼	...	...	3.4
353½	246⅛	**Haleon**‡	314	- 1⅝	...	...
2205	1190½	Hikma Pharms‡	2119	- 50	...	15.8
335	134½	Hutchmed China♦	237¼	- 2¾	...	...
6⅞	1½	ImmuPharma♦	2	...	...	-0.6
7025	1365	Indivior	1813	- 9	...	...
88½	42	Inspiration Health♦	44	...	...	6.8
41½	17½	IXICO♦	20¼	...	...	6.5
501	491½	Mediclinic	501	+ ½	...	31.3
3½	1⅜	N4 Pharma♦	1½	...	...	-1.7
71½	34	NIOX Group♦‡	68⅝	+ 1	...	68.7
89.07	87.72	Novartis	CHF87.79	- 1.39	...	27.78

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
4	2⅛	Omega Diags◆	2⅛	...	...	-0.8
14	2	Ovoca Bio◆	2	- ¼	...	-0.5
562	297	Oxford Biomedica	308	+ 3½	...	13.8
5	⅞	Physiomics◆	2¾	+ ½	...	...
8½	3¼	Proteome Scies◆	6	- ¼	...	...
6628	5556	**Reckitt Benckiser**‡	5696	- 2	...	...
63½	15⅛	RUA Life Sciences◆	16¼	- ½	...	-1.5
217½	70	Sareum Hldgs◆	80	...	...	...
1314½	984½	**Smith & Neph**	1036½	- 18½	...	23.5
250	203	Spire Hcare	215½	- ½	...	...
24	6¾	Synairgen◆	9¼	+ ⅝	...	-0.4
70	48	Tissue Regenix◆	53½	+ 3½	...	...
40½	8½	Totally◆	8½	- ⅛	...	13.6
435	295	Tristel◆	340	...	...	70.1
20	6	ValiRx◆	6½	+ ¼	...	...

Industrials

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
107	54⅜	Accsys Tech◆	73	- ⅜	...	...
4628⅝	3327½	BASF	3913¾	- 62¼	...	7.7
5352⅜	4061⅛	Bayer DM50	4320¼	+ ¾	...	50.4
180	46½	Biome Tech◆	155	- 5	...	-5.1
2¾	1½	Byotrol◆	1¾	...	...	...
...	...	Camb Gbl Timber◆	6¾	...	...	-9.0
79	50⅞	Coats Grp	76½	- ½	...	17.0
7218	5196	**Croda**‡	5284	- 184	...	23.0
1080	575	Cropper (James)◆	750	...	...	22.8
129	87⅝	Elementis	116⅛	+ ⅛	...	...
19	11	Hardide◆	11¼	...	...	-2.1
2373	1543	**Johnson Math**	1718½	- 33½	...	21.6
1601	1180	**Mondi**‡	1298½	- 9	...	9.9
110	77½	Robinson◆	92½	...	...	...
368½	241¾	**DS Smith**	307⅞	- 1⅝	...	17.4
726½	522¾	Swire Pacific	561⅞	+ 3	...	...
17¼	6⅝	Symph Environ◆	8	- ¾	...	...
192⅝	60¾	Synthomer	60¾	- 1½	...	1.2
2512⅜	2011	Takeda Pharm	2454	+ 9⅛	...	13.7
7	1⅜	Velocys◆	1⅜	...	...	-1.8
1913	1338	Victrex	1492	...	...	17.7
640	397½	Wynnstay Group◆	412½	...	...	9.4
410	233	Zotefoams	350	...	...	21.0

Leisure

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
128¾	51⅝	888 Hldgs	128¾	- 1¼	...	9.5
846	542	Accesso Tech◆	698	+ 11	...	18.3
680	370	Best of the Best◆	530	...	...	5.9
1356½	501⅜	Carnival	1094	- 4	...	-1.7
132½	108	Celtic◆	127½	...	...	12.6
7	¼	Cineworld#	⅜	...	...	...
424½	215⅛	Domino's Pizza‡	396⅜	...	...	20.2
1587½	1083	**Entain**‡	1167	- 19	...	26.1
16725	9694	**Flutter Ent**	14055	- 290	...	...
38	23	Gaming Realms◆	35⅜	+ ⅞	...	...
290	290	Heavitree◆	290	...	...	17.4
185	65	Heavitree A◆	150	...	...	9.0
145	90	Hermes Pacific◆	90	- 20	...	...
6068	4275	**InterContinental Hotels**‡	6068	+ 86	...	56.8
1¼	¾	Minoan Gp◆	⅞	...	...	-6.5
236⅛	102	Mitch & Butlers	217⅛	- ⅜	...	...
189½	82¾	On The Beach	94⅜	+ ¼	...	-4.9
1435	1005	PPHE Hotels	1105	+ 5	...	-8.9
104⅜	52⅜	Rank Grp	87⅞	+ 1	...	11.8
51⅛	26⅝	Restaurant Gp	43⅝	+ 1⅞	...	-8.2
50½	32½	Rotala◆	42½	- 1	...	...
175	...	Sportech◆	98	- ⅜	...	...
281⅛	184¾	SSP	232½	...	...	-4.5
5¾	1¾	Tasty◆	2¼	...	...	3.1
295	62½	Tintra◆#	67½	...	...	-1.1
704⅜	290⅝	Tui	459⅜	- 5⅜	...	-4.8
2⅞	1⅛	Webis Holdings◆	1⅜	...	...	...
783½	389¾	Wetherspoon JD	686½	- 15	...	-6.4
3565	2285	**Whitbread**	3565	+ 80	...	...
1240	870	Young & Co - A◆	1160	+ 40	...	...
892	564	Young & Co - N/V◆	781	+ 6	...	...

Media

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
88	68	Aeorema Comms◆	76½	...	...	21.1
50	21	Altitude Group◆	50	- 1	...	...
91	63½	Arcontech Grp◆	87½	- 1½	...	12.1
281	176⅛	Ascential	202⅜	+ 1⅛	...	...
669	486⅛	**Auto Trader**‡	596⅜	- 6¾	...	29.4
492	366	Bloomsbury Pub	410	...	...	16.9
8	⅜	Bonhill Group◆	⅝	- ⅛	...	-1.5
172½	87	Catalyst Media◆	120	...	...	...
¼	...	Catenae◆	⅛	...	...	-0.2
...	...	DCD Media◆#	100	- 30	...	5.0
58½	43	Ebiquity◆	46	...	...	...
1818	643	Future	772½	- 11½	...	13.3
196	144⅞	GlobalData◆	155	+ 2½	...	7.6
120¾	50	Hyve Group	120½	...	...	...
196	69⅜	IG Design Grp◆	132½	...	...	19.4
776	506½	**Informa**‡	737¾	+ ⅜	...	...
90	55⅛	ITV	70⅞	...	...	7.6
9¾	4⅛	Jaywing◆	4¾	...	...	...
4	1½	Live Company Gp◆#	2	...	...	-0.4
171	83½	ME Group	164	- 1⅛	...	28.6
...	...	Mediazest◆	...	...	...	-4.5
46½	26½	Merit Grp◆	42½	...	...	...
45	1½	Mirada◆	1½	- 1⅜	...	...
58	38½	Mission Group◆	41	- ½	...	6.9
280⅜	172⅜	Moneysupermarket‡	245¾	+ ½	...	25.0
1706⅛	1179¾	News Corp A	1672¼	- 22⅝	...	27.2
1743¼	1205	News Corp B	1710½	- 25	...	27.9
1112	554	Next 15 Group◆	641	+ 18	...	...
995⅛	754	**Pearson**‡	852⅛	+ 1	...	40.7
4⅜	2	Primorus Inv◆	3⅛	...	...	5.7
198	107½	Quarto	115	...	...	6.4
120⅝	66¼	Reach‡	73¼	...	...	81.4
1½	¾	REACT Grp◆	1½	...	...	21.4
2722	2157	**Relx**‡	2605	+ 21	...	34.3
637¾	445⅜	**Rightmove**	561⅛	- 2⅜	...	31.7
101⅞	65	SpaceandPeople◆	75	...	...	...
315	194	STV Group	197	+ 3	...	4.8
230	122½	System1 Group◆	215	+ 8	...	10.2
2929⅜	2223	21st Cent Fox Inc A	2508⅝	+ 41	...	13.7
2711½	2096¾	21st Cent Fox Inc B	2320¼	+ 30¼	...	12.7
...	...	Vela Tech◆	...	...	...	6.3
356	257	Wilmington	312	- 1	...	19.8
1051½	725¾	**WPP**	766¾	- 5½	...	14.6
112½	77½	Zinc Media◆	80	...	...	-5.0

Natural resources

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
¾	⅜	ADM Energy◆	½	...	...	...
⅛	...	Advance Energy◆#	⅛	...	...	-0.1
29½	11¼	AFC Energy◆	18⅞	+ 2⅛	...	...
31	20½	Afentra PLC◆#	24¼	...	...	...
⅛	...	Alba Mineral Res◆	...	...	...	-2.0
⅝	⅛	Alien Metals◆	⅛	...	...	-5.3
87⅜	53⅝	Alumina	55	- 1½	...	11.4
1¼	⅞	Aminex	1⅛	...	...	-6.6
1¾	...	Amur Mins Corp◆	...	...	...	-2.0
726273⅞	2508¾	Anglo Amer Plat	2508¾	- 54	...	1.8
3672½	1970	**Anglo American**‡	2101½	- 33½	...	4.1
121	56½	Anglo Asian Mng◆	57	- ⅜	...	4.9
1805	1042½	**Antofagasta**‡	1478	+ 17	...	15.2
4⅜	2⅜	Arc Minerals◆	3	...	...	2.2
3½	2	Ariana Res◆	2¾	...	...	3.7
⅝	¼	Arkle Resources◆	¼	...	...	-1.0
2⅜	⅞	Armadale Cap◆	⅞	...	...	...
1⅝	⅞	Asiamet Rsrcs◆	1⅛	...	...	...
380	188	Atalaya Mine◆‡	315	- 7	...	3.9
¼	...	Baron Oil◆	...	...	...	...
4¾	1⅜	Beowulf Mining◆	1½	...	...	-6.5
...	...	Bezant Res◆	...	...	...	-0.7
2855	2052	BHP Group	2336	- 6½	...	10.2
5⅜	1¾	Border & Sthn Pet◆	2⅛	...	...	...
20⅜	13¼	Bougainville	17½	- ¾	...	...
4½	⅞	BowLeven◆	1¾	...	...	-2.2
567½	430	**BP**‡	511½	+ 9¾	...	18.5
16⅝	6½	Cadence Min◆	6¾	...	...	0.6
2½	1½	Cadogan Petrol	1¾	...	...	24.3
1350	775	Caledonia Mining◆	810	- 40	...	7.9
555¼	162	Capricorn Energy	169⅜	- 1½	...	1.3
8⅜	2¼	Caspian Sunrise◆	3⅛	...	...	92.6
125½	83	Centamin‡	86	- ½	...	13.3
292½	175½	Cent Asia Metals◆	205	- 1	...	6.0
14½	6⅛	Chaarat Gold◆	6½	...	...	...
19⅞	13⅜	Chariot Oil & Gas◆	14½	- ¼	...	...
4	1¼	China Nonferr Gold◆	1⅜	...	...	...
⅛	...	Clontarf Energy◆	...	...	...	-1.6
34½	15¼	Condor Gld◆	22¼	- ¼	...	...
⅜	⅛	Corcel◆	¼	...	...	-0.2
10244⅜	76	DRD Gold	76	- 1¾	...	8.9
1⅛	¼	ECR Minerals◆	¼	...	...	-1.7
1⅜	⅝	Empyrean Energy◆	⅞	...	...	-6.6
2184	1461	**Endeavour**‡	1578	- 15	...	23.4
31½	14	EnQuest	15¼	- 2	...	0.9
7⅛	2¼	Eurasia Mining◆	3	...	...	...
3	⅞	Europa Oil&Gas◆	1	...	...	10.0
175	75	Ferrexpo	79½	- 3⅞	...	0.6
968	509⅛	**Fresnillo**‡	562¾	+ ⅛	...	13.3
...	...	G3 Exploration#	28	...	...	-2.6
39	14½	Galantas Gold◆	15½	...	...	-2.6
7¼	1⅞	GCM Resources◆	2⅛	...	...	-1.7
36⅝	15¾	Gem Diamonds	17¼	...	...	1.8
20¼	8⅜	Getech◆	8⅝	...	...	-2.0
578	411⅜	**Glencore**‡	432⅛	- 3¾	...	15.8
⅜	⅛	Global Petrol◆	⅛	...	...	-1.5
134673½	974½	Gold Fields	974½	- 27⅞	...	15.0
12½	6¾	Goldplat◆	6¾	...	...	5.1
8⅛	2⅛	Goldstone Res◆#	2⅛	...	...	-9.9
9⅛	6⅛	GreatId Gld◆	6⅛	- ¼	...	...
96½	70	Griffin Mining◆	78½	- 1⅞	...	8.6
253½	92¼	Gulf Keystone	92¾	- 4¾	...	5.8
25⅞	5⅝	Harland & Wolff Gp◆	15¼	- 1¼	...	1.2
94⅞	51½	Hochschild	85¼	...	...	8.2
172	85	Horizonte Minrls◆	129	...	...	...
351½	197⅜	Hunting PLC	255½	...	...	-6.5
¼	...	Independ Res◆#	...	...	...	...
280	125	Indus Gas◆	141	...	...	14.6
⅜	¼	Ironveld◆	¼	...	...	-4.3
179⅜	66¾	ITM Power◆	83½	- ⅜	...	...
14	6¼	Jubilee Metals◆	7	...	...	5.8
4¾	1⅝	Karel Diamd Res◆	3⅝	...	...	...
1	½	KEFI Gold and Copper◆	½	...	...	-2.3
493	380½	Kenmare Res	420	- 2	...	4.9
9	8⅝	Lamprell#	8⅞	...	...	-0.7
20	8¼	Landore Res◆	10¼	+ ¼	...	-2.3
½	...	Lansdowne O&G◆	...	...	...	-2.7
15	10	Leeds Group◆	10	- 2½	...	-1.6
8¾	3⅛	Lexington Gold◆	6⅛	...	...	...
21½	7¼	MC Mining◆	8	- ¼	...	-1.6
2¼	¾	Metals Explorn◆	2	...	...	3.5
¼	⅛	Nostra Terra◆	⅛	...	...	-0.9
26½	⅛	Nostrum O&G	12⅛	- ½	...	-0.1
...	...	Oil Search	218⅞	- 5⅜	...	60.3
...	...	Oilex◆#	⅛	...	...	-3.7
⅛	...	Oriole Resources◆	...	...	...	-1.1
⅞	½	Ormonde Mining◆#	¾	...	...	-3.1
17⅛	3	Orosur Mining◆	3	...	...	-4.6
20⅛	12	Pan African Res◆	13¾	...	...	4.5
128⅝	10½	Pantheon Res◆	20⅜	- ⅛	...	...
67⅞	13	Parkmead Grp◆	18	...	...	-1.5
¾	¼	Pathfinder Mins◆	⅜	...	...	-3.9
120	64¾	Petra Diamonds	70⅞	...	...	2.3
2	⅞	Petrel Resources◆	1⅛	...	...	-6.0
7	1⅝	Petro Matad◆	3¾	...	...	...
125½	46	Petrofac	74¼	+ 1¾	...	-1.9
1	...	Petroneft Res◆#	...	...	...	-0.2
...	...	Petropavlovsk#	1⅛	- ⅛	...	1.6
7½	5½	Phoenix Global◆	6½	+ ¼	...	-1.6
12¼	1⅝	Plexus Holdings◆	12¼	+ ¾	...	-3.0
350	150	Polymetal Intl#	215	+ 50	...	...
698	499	Porvair	610	+ 4	...	23.4
19¼	5¼	Prospex Energy◆	6½	...	...	-8.6
14⅝	8	Proton Motor Power S◆	8	...	...	-1.4
3½	3¼	Providence Res◆	3¼	...	...	29.0
2¾	⅞	Quadrise◆	1	...	...	-3.9
21	2	Rambler Met&Min◆#	5⅜	...	...	0.1
⅜	...	Reabold Resources◆	...	...	...	-1.7
½	⅛	Red Rock Res◆	⅛	...	...	-0.8
6564⅛	4486½	Rio Tinto Ltd	5956⅞	+ 10⅛	...	6.2
6377	4486	**Rio Tinto**‡	4975	- 25	...	5.2
41⅛	12½	San Leon Energy◆#	16½	+ 1½	...	6.1
½	⅛	Scirocco Energy◆	½	...	...	...
38½	21½	Serabi Gold◆	24	- 1	...	3.2
390	198⅜	Serica Energy◆	259	+ 4⅜	...	...
13½	8¾	Shanta Gold◆	10⅛	...	...	6.4
2604½	2200½	**Shell**‡	2469	+ 24½	...	13.0
...	...	Shuka Minerals◆	13¾	...	...	-0.9
2	⅞	Sound Energy◆	⅞	...	...	6.1
106½	10¼	Star Energy◆	10¼	- ¼	...	-0.5
⅛	...	Sunrise Resources◆	...	...	...	...
¼	...	Tertiary Minerals◆	...	...	...	-2.3
6½	1⅝	Thor Mining◆	1¾	...	...	...
5241⅞	3832	Total Eng SE	5104	+ 103⅛	...	11.6
¼	...	Tower Resources◆	...	...	...	-0.7
50⅞	22½	Tullow Oil	39	+ ⅞	...	3.9
...	...	UK Oil & Gas◆	...	...	...	-1.2
222	125	URU Metals◆	125	...	...	4.0
¾	⅛	Vast Res◆	¼	...	...	...
...	...	Victoria Oil&Gas◆#	3¾	...	...	-1.8
...	...	W Resources◆#	2⅝	...	...	-0.3
3¼	1⅞	Westmount Engy◆	2	...	...	-0.4
226	104½	Wood Grp (J)	164	+ 7½	...	-6.7
4½	¼	Woodbois◆	½	...	...	2.2
3½	1⅛	Xtract Resources◆	1¼	...	...	-2.4
7¼	3	Zephyr Energy◆	3½	+ ¼	...	-4.4

Professional & support services

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
5350	3280	4imprint Grp‡	4960	- 90	...	83.7
657½	460	Andrews Sykes◆	615	...	...	19.6
5874	3829	**Ashtead**‡	5310	- 158	...	25.8
7¾	⅞	Asimilar Group◆	1	...	...	...
78½	38	AssetCo◆	38½	- 1½	...	0.2
55	38½	Avisen◆	50	...	...	...
148	117	Begbies Traynor◆	123	- 1½	...	...
226	154½	Blancco Tech◆	226	...	...	81.0
3225	2664	**Bunzl**	2766	- 58	...	20.9
42⅝	17	Capita	17	- ⅜	...	1.3
41½	36	CEPS◆	41	+ 2	...	-9.3
160	105	Christie Group◆	107½	+ 2½	...	45.7
2235	1788½	**Compass**	2013	+ 3	...	48.9
252	97	CPPGroup◆	157½	+ ½	...	...
70	45	Croma Security◆	48	...	...	6.9
5066	4030	**DCC**	4265	- 31	...	14.1
104	30	De La Rue	57½	- ⅜	...	7.5
3308	2226	Diploma	3110	- 38	...	55.6
938	626	Discoverie	725	- 5	...	59.4
34	23½	Driver Group◆	29½	...	...	14.0
252	147	Essentra	147½	+ ⅛	...	16.5
3160	2552	**Experian**	2757	- 35	...	35.3
12680	9094	Ferguson	12640	- 135	...	18.6
274	225	FIH Group◆	242	- 8	...	...
10⅝	5	Grafenia◆	9	- ¼	...	-6.6
485	317	Hargeaves Serv◆	469	- 1	...	4.9
735	465	Impellam Grp◆	710	...	...	38.8
7½	4	Ince G◆#	5⅛	...	...	2.9
4528	3619	**Intertek**	4165	- 12	...	23.4
197⅝	115⅜	IWG	173¾	...	...	-6.6
138	77	Johnson Srvce◆	138	+ 14	...	86.2
197	106	Journeo◆	187	+ 2½	...	41.9
90	56½	Kier Gp	84¾	+ 1¼	...	8.2
1360	1080	Latham (J)◆	1110	...	...	6.0
1015	695	Lok'n Store◆	710	- 40	...	21.5
3400	2300	Lon Security◆	3000	+ 50	...	16.5
343	220	LSL Prop Services	244	+ 7	...	6.8
119	86	Macfarlane	109½	+ 1½	...	12.7
261	90	Maintel Hldgs◆	165	...	...	5.0
2000	8¼	Malvern Intl◆	26	+ 2	...	...
292	185	Mears Group	274	- 2	...	23.8
...	...	Menzies (John)	607	- 1	...	48.0
103⅛	61½	Mitie Gp	100½	+ 2⅛	...	50.3
13¾	3¾	MobilityOne◆	4½	- ¼	...	3.3
56½	25	Newmark Sec◆	54	...	...	...
6½	3½	Norm Broadbent◆	5¾	...	...	...
62½	37	Northern Bear◆‡	54½	...	...	5.5
286	218½	NWF Grp◆	228	...	...	...
491½	362⅛	PageGroup‡	407½	- 7⅜	...	11.0
61½	45½	PCI-PAL◆	47	...	...	-9.7
11½	6¾	Petards◆	6⅞	...	...	12.5
24	12½	PHSC◆	22½	...	...	40.9
1⅞	⅜	PowerHouse Egy◆	½	...	...	-1.0
98	66	Record	76½	- 1½	...	21.0
437½	283½	Redde Northgate‡	328	+ 1	...	8.2
760	555	Renew Hldgs◆	724	- 4	...	17.8
756	450	Renewi	474½	- 15½	...	10.0
655⅛	465	**Rentokil**‡	585¾	- 4	...	41.5
431	125	Restore◆	180	+ 8	...	21.4
610	412½	Ricardo	524	- 4	...	46.7
600	355	Robert Walters‡	357	+ 1	...	8.1
20	11	Roebuck Food Grp◆	13	- ½	...	1.9
239	207	RPS Group	221	- 1	...	...
1118	696½	**RS Group**	753	- 9⅛	...	19.1
53½	16	RTC Group◆	53½	...	...	...
408⅜	226⅛	RWS Hldgs◆	240⅛	+ 2⅛	...	22.0
431	365	Science Group◆	423	- 2	...	19.4
180⅛	136⅞	Serco	151⅞	+ 1⅜	...	6.2
57½	27½	Smiths News	42½	+ ⅝	...	4.1
3596	2452	**Smurfit Kappa**	3254	- 22	...	14.8
44	25⅜	Staffline Gp◆	31	+ 1	...	23.8
484½	332	SThree	346½	- 3	...	11.2
137½	102½	Synectics◆	112½	...	...	...
31	21⅝	Thruvision Group◆	28	...	...	...
85	35	Tribal◆	44¾	...	...	13.9
87	49	Vianet◆	79	- 1½	...	...
803	535	Vp	542½	- 5	...	13.3
2⅜	1⅛	Westminster◆	1⅜	...	...	-1.7

Real estate

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
131¼	95½	Shaftesbury Cap‡	114⅜	- 1⅜	...	33.6

Retailing

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
100½	41⅜	AO World	97⅝	+ 3⅝	...	...
590½	295½	**B&M European**	547¾	- 19⅛	...	12.7
42⅝	20¼	Brown (N)◆	21⅝	...	...	6.3
112½	40⅜	Card Factory	107¾	+ 5½	...	...
2192	1591	CVS Group◆	2100	- 14	...	58.8
165	104¾	DFS Furn	110	- ⅜	...	5.8
1275	670½	Dunelm	1140	+ 10	...	15.3
899	621	**Frasers Group**	803	- 1½	...	35.6
2904	1673	Greggs	2450	- 6	...	21.4
226⅛	126½	Halfords‡	186¾	- 1¼	...	6.2
759⅛	480⅞	Howden Joinery	732¾	- 4¾	...	13.8
941	675	Inchcape	767½	+ 2½	...	25.9
4⅜	1⅝	IQ-AI	4⅜	+ ⅛	...	...
186⅝	89⅛	**JD Sports**	140⅞	- 1½	...	17.0
291½	203	**Kingfisher**	227½	- 4	...	5.7
129⅛	61½	Lookers‡	128¾	+ ⅛	...	8.2
231½	93⅛	Marks & Spencer	223¾	- 3⅛	...	...
11⅛	5⅛	Mothercare◆	5⅛	...	...	-3.2
145	60	Naked Wines◆	71	+ ½	...	...
7228	4383	**Next**	7042	+ 6	...	13.4
976⅜	343⅜	**Ocado**	857¾	- 21	...	...
28⅜	14⅞	Pendragon	17¾	- ¾	...	5.5
397½	257¾	Pets at Home	379⅜	- ½	...	15.4
188½	72⅞	Saga	144¾	- 3¾	...	...
289½	169⅞	**Sainsbury's**	265⅜	- 3⅛	...	22.3
1714	1132½	WH Smith	1484	+ 3	...	...
27¼	14¼	Sosandar◆	23½	...	...	...
...	...	Studio Retail#	115	- 2½	...	2.4
284½	199⅛	**Tesco**	256¼	- 7½	...	13.0
56⅜	38	Topps Tiles	49⅞	+ ½	...	9.0

Technology

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
100½	59	Access Intell◆	60½	...	...	-8.4
133½	9½	Aferian plc◆	14	+ ¼	...	2.5
196½	126	Alfa Financial	153	+ 1	...	23.9
13¾	8¼	Allied Minds	13¾	+ 3⅛	...	-1.2
420	268	Aptitude Software	292	- 1	...	32.8
265	162½	Bango◆	162½	- 5	...	...
33	21	BATM Adv Coms	26⅛	...	...	10.9
38	14¼	Berkeley Res	21	+ ½	...	-8.9
20	5¾	Blackbird◆	8½	- 1	...	...
1¼	¾	CloudCoCo Group◆	¾	...	...	-1.8
2474	1810	Computacenter	2184	+ 18	...	13.5
87	55½	Concurrent Tech◆	72½	+ 2	...	17.2
11½	5¾	Corero◆	6¼	...	...	...
2250	1080	Craneware◆	1500	+ 115	...	68.4
3¼	1¾	Crimson Tide◆	2⅜	...	...	16.3
24	11¼	CyanConn Hldgs◆	15¼	...	...	...
261½	157½	D4t4 Solutions◆	185	...	...	21.9
21	13	Dillistone Group◆	13½	...	...	-3.9
⅜	⅛	EQTEC◆	⅛	...	...	-1.8
870	518	FDM Group	581	- 1	...	20.1
18	10¾	Filtronic◆	16½	...	...	44.5
2165	1230	First Derivts◆	1604	- 26	...	...
647	213¾	GB Group◆	224½	+ 1⅜	...	17.1
180½	135	GreshamTech	151½	...	...	...
78	24¼	Ilika◆	42½	- ½	...	...
132½	91	Ingenta◆	116½	+ ½	...	68.1
77	38	Intercede◆	52	...	...	17.9
189⅜	112	Iomart◆‡	180⅛	+ ⅛	...	19.8
59⅞	17	IQE◆	17⅛	- ⅞	...	...
134½	112½	K3 Business Tch◆	123	...	...	-2.1
1657¼	1025⅞	LG Electronics	1385⅞	- 39¾	...	3.6
⅛	⅛	Location Sciences◆#	⅛	...	...	-2.3
58	42	MTI Wireless◆	44	...	...	14.6
55¾	17	Nanoco Gp	17¼	...	...	...
116½	74	Netcall◆	79½	+ 2½	...	...
49½	35	Northamber◆	45½	...	...	...
25¾	10¼	Online Blockchain◆	12	...	...	-6.3
119	80½	Oxford Metrics◆	98	+ 1	...	42.6
8½	2¾	Parity◆	2¾	- ½	...	-3.9
41½	28½	Pennant Intl◆	38	+ 1½	...	...
634½	390¾	Playtech	526	- 3	...	5.5
379¾	297⅛	QinetiQ	329⅛	- 2⅜	...	25.7
92	20½	RM	61⅜	+ ½	...	12.2
978	679¾	**Sage**	973	...	...	37.3
7⅝	5	Seeing Machines◆	5⅞	...	...	...
116½	37	Shearwater Grp◆	45½	- 3	...	28.1
54	31½	Smartspace S'ware◆	43	+ ½	...	-4.5
1534	1071	Softcat	1531	+ 25	...	30.0
286⅛	148⅝	Spirent Comms‡	148¾	- 2¾	...	13.8
68	24¾	SRT Marine◆	50	+ ½	...	...
572½	362⅞	Tele. Ericsson	413⅛	+ 6¾	...	7.5
112½	72½	Touchstar◆	105	...	...	...
1000	740	Tracsis◆	740	+ 5	...	94.2
20½	12¼	Trakm8◆	17	...	...	...
165	81	Triad Grp	135	...	...	14.8
1380	49	Wandisco◆	72⅛	- 5¾	...	-1.3
765	400	Water Intel◆	410	- 5	...	22.5
220	144½	Xaar	187½	- ½	...	...
6¼	⅛	Yourgene◆	½	...	...	-0.3
207½	59	Zoo Digital◆	65½	...	...	...

Telecoms

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
200½	100	AdEPT Technology◆‡	200½	...	...	...
144	103⅝	**Airtel Africa**	114¼	+ ¼	...	10.1
160¼	112	**BT Group**‡	114⅛	- ¼	...	11.0
85¼	47⅞	Currys plc	49	- ⅜	...	2.3
1210	1012	Gamma Comms◆	1080	+ 12	...	19.5
128⅛	82	Helios Towers	89	...	...	-8.0
2215½	1055	Just Eat T'away	1083	- 37	...	-2.3
¼	...	Mobile Streams◆	...	...	...	-1.4
2¼	⅝	Mobile Tornado◆	1½	...	...	-8.8
2500	1464	Telecom Plus	1578	- 12	...	40.4
113¾	70	**Vodafone**	73⅜	+ 1	...	...

Transport

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
340	224	Braemar Ship#	233	+ 3	...	7.7
528	285	EasyJet	435⅜	+ 3¼	...	-2.7
6⅞	2⅜	Esken Limited	3½	- ⅛	...	-0.1
155½	93½	FirstGroup	150⅛	+ 2⅝	...	35.7
425	251	Fisher (James)	340½	- 2½	...	-6.1
173½	93⅝	**International Airlines**	159⅝	- 1⅞	...	-3.5
272⅜	183⅛	IDS	241½	+ 3¾	...	2.7
439¼	322	Irish Cont Uts	393	...	...	...
1381½	667¾	Jet2◆	1053	- 3	...	-5.6
198⅞	75⅜	Mobico Group	87	+ 2	...	-5.1
1035	820	Ocean Wilson	980	...	...	4.9
...	...	Stagecoach	104⅝	...	...	14.7
24	17	Sutton Harbour◆	17½	...	...	...
372	192⅜	Wincanton	236	- 4	...	6.4
3158	1357½	Wizz Air	2197	- 34	...	-4.9

Utilities

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E
156	67¼	**Centrica**	156	+ 3	...	15.7
256½	249	ContourGlobal	251	+ ½	...	28.3
750	473⅜	Drax Group‡	544¾	- 2	...	40.3
555	432	Jersey Electricity	450	...	...	8.5
1162	858⅜	**National Grid**	969	- 9⅛	...	22.5
9¾	5⅝	OPG Power◆	8⅜	...	...	5.4
1000	614½	Pennon	614½	- 21	...	44.5
¾	¼	Rurelec◆	½	...	...	-0.4
2975	2213	**Severn Trent**	2363	- 18	...	...
1900	1428	**SSE**‡	1582	- 27	...	6.1
1102½	828⅛	**United Utilities**	927¾	- 4⅛	...	85.1

◆AIM company; # Price at suspension; † Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; * figures or report awaited; . . . No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index. Investment Cos sector Nav Dis or Prm supplied by Morningstar.

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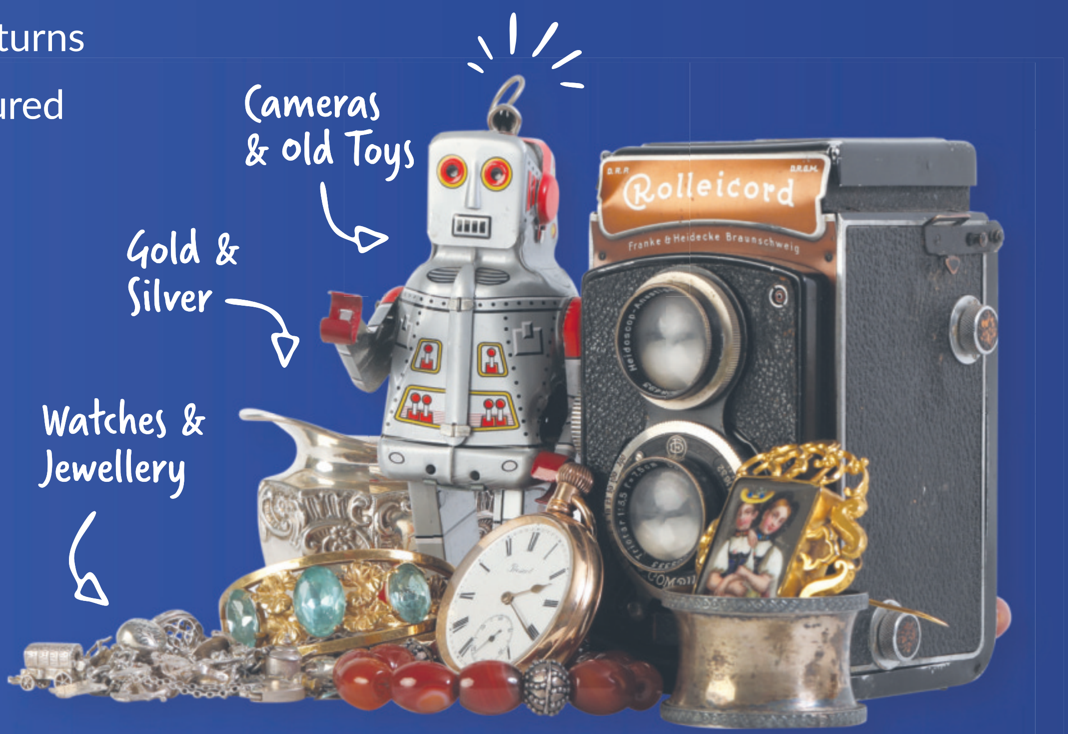
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Register

Obituaries

Arthur Boyt

Parsimonious roadkill enthusiast whose apparently eccentric diet of badger, bat, crow and squirrel disguised a serious ethical purpose

JAMES DADZITIS/SWNS.COM; AFP/GETTY IMAGES



In 2015 Boyt turned a washed-up dolphin that he had found into Christmas lunch



Arthur Boyt's favourite snack was a badger ham sandwich. He was also partial to weasel, crow, hedgehog, squirrel, bat and otter. Driving his battered grey Citroën through Cornwall he would keep his eyes peeled for freshly killed wildlife. "Generally the most desirable roadkill ends up at the side of the road," he noted matter-of-factly. "Those in the middle tend to have been scrunched."

One visiting journalist described him spotting a dead pheasant that he picked up by its feet, stuffed into a Laura Ashley carrier bag and deposited in the back of the car. He tried not to swing it about too much in case it made a mess. "My wife doesn't like that," he explained. "Sometimes I use her car and forget that I've left a badger in it."

Much as he considered himself a dog lover, Boyt was not averse to collecting their dead bodies if he saw them lying on the sides of roads. "Labrador is rather special," he said. "It has a pleasant taste and flavour that is a bit like lamb." Canine stew was not a regular treat though, because he made sure any dead dog wearing an identification collar was returned to its owner.

He once ate a hare sandwich followed by a dog sandwich. "I ate the hare first to give it time to get away before I sent the dog down after it," he explained in his whimsical way.

The great thing about roadkill was knowing that it had not been purposely killed. "I feel very strongly about killing animals, so strongly I can only just about manage a chicken leg at a party or something. I would never buy meat," he told The Guardian. It was the obvious choice of food, he said, comparing it with eating fallen apples. "So what's the difference?" he demanded. "Just because it hasn't got a label does not mean it's not edible."

Over time Boyt became an expert on cooking roadkill. "Roasting tends to dry them out so, for many years, I pressure cooked them," he said. "Partly because it made sure that whatever parasites were there were dead." Unfortunately, not many "friends, visitors or columnists from The Times liked the taste of badgers in pressure cookers, so I had to learn to casserole them and add sauces".

The oddest roadkill was bat. "A giant horseshoe," he said. "It was small and the taste was not memorable." Rats were also bland. "They have a white meat and, like grey squirrel, it hasn't a lot of flavour," he said, warming to his theme. "People say they carry disease, but I would sooner eat a country rat than the raw meat you get served in restaurants."

Cats were equally uninspiring, though could be improved with a spoonful of redcurrant jelly. Fox did not suit his palate and he compared its taste to a mixture of diesel and onions. "It had a pungent taste that went on and on repeating after I had swallowed it," he said.

Boyt's finds were not only roadkill. Ever frugal in his habits, he wore clothes discarded by the A30 and rummaged for food in the bins behind supermarkets. Nor were they confined to Britain. While visiting a cousin in Alberta, Canada, he came across a freshly-killed porcupine. "Unfortunately, she didn't feel able to cook it, so I took the head home with me," he explained. Another cousin died from variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, the human form of BSE. "I am sure that was from some kind of supermarket meat," he insisted.

Like many people, Boyt enjoyed a special dish at Christmas. One year it was a sperm whale that had washed up in Cornwall over the summer and he had stashed away in his freezer. "They carried out a post mortem on it and I got some slabs of meat," he told the Western Morning News, anticipating his festive feast. "First of all I'm going to marinade it in wine, vinegar and then seasoning. Then fry it with onions, then casserole it. I'll then cook some Brussels sprouts."

He ate a dolphin found washed on the beach for his Christmas lunch

Friends warned that the whale could contain mercury but Boyt was unconcerned, as he was by other supposed health risks. "I have consumed meat that was blown up like horses on the Western Front," he explained. "If bodies are swollen, gasified and green they do taste different, but if you cook them thoroughly, you can still eat them. As with all meat, you just make sure you cook it long and hot enough to kill any bugs."

On another occasion a dolphin became his Christmas lunch, even though it is technically a "royal fish" and so belongs to the crown. Boyt was typically unrepentant, saying: "I don't suppose the Queen will be interested in getting back a washed-up dolphin that has been dead for a month or more."

Beyond all the playfulness and mischief-making he had a serious point to make about roadkill not being "wasted" as a source of nutrition. He also said that because the wild animals killed by traffic had led a more or less organic existence it was more ethical to eat their meat than that of the industrially-farmed cattle that had been "standing all winter in their own excrement, fed on heavily fertilised fodder, supplemented with growth hormones and injected with antibiotics".

Arthur Boyt and his twin brother Dennis were born in Watford, Hertfordshire, in 1939 on the day that Britain declared war on Germany. Their father was William Boyt, a solicitor who had served in the Royal Garrison Artillery in Gibraltar during the First World War, and their mother was Bessie (née Legg), a botanist who kept animal skulls at home; their older siblings were John and Naomi. Two days after the twins' tenth birthday their father suffered a fatal heart attack while commuting to his office in Southampton Row.

Boyt passed the 11-plus and was educated at Watford Grammar School, often collecting dead animals on the way to school. On one occasion he came across a dead polecat in the canal. Realising this was too good an opportunity to miss, he extracted its potent scent glands and smeared them liberally along the edge of a master's desk. "The effect was to cause gagging and choking among the more sensitive children," he recalled with glee.

His first experience of roadkill was at the age of 13 when he found a dead pheasant while riding his bike through Windsor Great Park. "I couldn't leave it there, so I brought it home. Mother said, 'Would you like me to cook that?'" he recalled. Plucking the feathers was harder than he had imagined, but once they were removed his mother showed him how to singe off the remaining hairs by holding the bird over a gas ring.



Boyt thought nothing of riding 75 miles to visit Naomi. "Every trip would produce quite a crop of pheasants and hares and so forth," he said. "I'd arrive at my sister's laden down with dead birds and mammals of all kinds." Meanwhile, John gave him a book on taxidermy and his first specimen was a stoat, which he discovered hanging on a gamekeeper's gibbet.

He spent seven years as an entomologist with the veterinary firm Cooper, McDougall and Robertson at Berkhamsted Hill while studying for a degree in biology.

He then became a librarian and information officer at the Fire Research Station at Borehamwood.

His family were members of the Exclusive Brethren and in 1963 he married Prudence Bedford, who was also a member of the tight-knit sect. However, he was excommunicated in 1976 for being "a bad influence on young people". His wife left him and he became estranged from his twin.

Collecting roadkill did not go down well with his second wife Su, a vegetarian, who survives him. "We compromise," he told the BBC in 2008, explaining that he dined on wildlife in front of the television while she ate alone in the bedroom. He stopped eating dog out of deference to her. "I have to be discreet because I don't want her to rush off and leave me," he explained.

He took early retirement and started driving the school bus for Haberdashers' Aske's. The children were friendly, but on one occasion he was summoned by the bus company owner because parents were complaining about the stench from a dead fox on his bus.

On another occasion the children refused to believe that he had been eating badger, so the following day he brought some along and ate it in front of them.

Eventually he and Su moved to Cornwall, living in a 500-year-old farmhouse by the edge of a disused 1940s airfield on Davidstow Moor with a tortoiseshell rescue cat that, somewhat disturbingly given his tastes, was called Pie. Practical jokers occasionally telephoned pretending to be the ghosts of animals he had eaten.

Boyt, a lean and bespectacled man who twice ran the London Marathon in under three hours, was a canoeist, birdwatcher and a member of the Loveny Male Voice Choir. He continued cycling into his eighties and his book, *Roadkill: Recollections, Reminiscences and Recipes*, was published in 2022. His other great interest was orienteering and in November 2009 he won bronze in the men's 70-to-75 age category at the World Masters Orienteering Championships in Australia. He celebrated by eating "a wallaby, a possum and a parrot".

Arthur Boyt, roadkill enthusiast, was born on September 3, 1939. He died of prostate cancer on July 4, 2023, aged 83

Harris Mann

Car designer at British Leyland who was ridiculed for the Austin Allegro but enjoyed more success with the Triumph TR7

Launched in the year the UK entered the European Economic Community, and with a jaunty Italian name, the Austin Allegro promised a new era of prosperity for the British car industry, with chic and reliable vehicles set to seduce domestic motorists and conquer the continent.

It did not work out that way despite the best efforts of Harris Mann, the chief designer of British Leyland, who defined the look of some of the most famous British cars of the Seventies.

Mann was tasked with shaping the successor to the bestselling 1100/1300 range of small family cars built by the British Motor Corporation (BMC), which became British Leyland in 1968 in a merger. A rising talent in one of the five biggest car companies in the world, he could hardly have imagined that he was designing a vehicle that would not merely be ridiculed for its defects but also regarded as a microcosm of the nation's economic malaise.

Developed over four years at a cost of £21 million, with a starting price of £950 (the equivalent of about £10,000 today), the Allegro was billed as "The new driving force from Austin" and the Leyland sales chief, an upbeat American named Filmer Paradise, breezily declared that marketing it would be "a piece of cake — of all the cars I've sold this is going to be the easiest".

Despite a sun-baked press premiere in Marbella in May 1973 that featured, according to one report, "distractingly gorgeous model girls", the Allegro was panned by critics and dubbed the "All-aggro" for its unreliability. Tales of wheels falling off, doors jamming, porous boots and rear windscreens popping out alarmed potential buyers and the car was mocked for being more aerodynamically efficient in reverse than going forward.

The blandly pudgy exterior underwhelmed, while the boldest design feature — a "quartic" near-square steering wheel that supposedly helped drivers to see the dashboard instruments — was widely disliked. In 1975 the company corrected some of the errors by introducing a Mk 2 with a more conventional steering wheel. By then, Paradise had left to sell Toyotas and British Leyland was mired in a financial tailspin that led to it being bailed out and part-nationalised by the Labour government.

JEFF GILBERT/SHUTTERSTOCK



Mann with an Allegro in 2015. Industrial strife and poor build quality blighted the project after the car's launch in 1973

Though it consistently made the top ten in annual UK sales charts, the Allegro was far less popular than its predecessors. Only about 650,000 were made by the time production ceased in 1982 in favour of the Maestro. If the car-buying public were underwhelmed, compilers of "worst car" lists embraced it. "Was there ever a car more reviled than the Austin Allegro?" an Auto Express journalist mused in an article marking its 50th anniversary. "Perhaps its contemporary, the Marina, was just as unloved, but if there's one machine that you're guaranteed to see in any list of crap cars, it's the Austin Allegro."

This was not the fault of Mann, whose early concept was diluted by internal politics and cost-cutting and undermined by shoddy workmanship. "It took a lot of stick, but it wasn't that bad a car," he once said. "The trouble was that every one off the line was different in some way, thanks to quality control." His first plans, drawn up in his studio at the Longbridge plant in Birmingham, were for a sharp-angled, low-bodied saloon. Cost-cutting edicts meant that the Allegro had to share parts with other models, including the bulky heater from the Marina and hulking engines from the Maxi. This forced the bonnet higher and bloated the Allegro, hampering both appearance and performance. Nor was the "quartic" steering wheel his idea.

Meanwhile, the 1973 oil crisis sent the cost of petrol soaring, hurting sales, and hostility between trade unions and management fostered low worker morale and led to industrial action, limited production capacity and capricious build quality.

Mann was certainly capable of daring designs, such as his 1969 Zanda. A low-slung concept sports car with a long sloping bonnet and knife-edge lines, it is easy to imagine it starring in a futuristic Hollywood sci-fi film of the 1970s. "If Harris had been born in France or Italy, then we'd probably have seen extraordinary Ferraris, stunning Maseratis and awesomely quirky Citroëns bearing his touches," wrote the journalist Richard Gunn.

"Instead, though, he was born in London, and ended up working for British Leyland during its committee-led nadir of the 1970s. It was a set of circumstances which would have been enough to doom any stylist, however innovative and talented."

With less interference from his bosses Mann's sleek, wedge-shaped visions were more faithfully realised in 1975 with the Triumph TR7, which was fashionable enough in the United States that the teenage tearaway Lucy Ewing, played by Charlene Tilton, drove a silver convertible in the television series *Dallas*. In Britain, meanwhile, Purdey (Joanna Lumley) piloted a yellow TR7 in *The New Avengers*.

Mann was also behind another fondly remembered car, the Princess. A rival to the Ford Granada and Cortina, it also came out in 1975 — though management rejected Mann's forward-looking proposal to make it a hatchback because they did not want it to compete with existing models. Marketing for Mann's design was a paradigm of British restraint. "Princess," trumpeted the sales brochure. "Better than average."

Harris William Mann was born in London in 1938 to Henry, a plumber, and Elsie (née Rockall), a statistician for the War Office. Interested in cars, motorcycles and machinery from a young age, and practical like his father, he developed his engineering skills at Ebury, a technical secondary school in Westminster. He left at 16 to join the Duple coach-building firm as an apprentice. Wowed by a Citroën DS 19 he ogled at a motor show at Earls Court in 1955, he resolved to design avant-garde cars. After National Service he rejoined Duple, leaving to become a design engineer, first for the Luton-based commercial vehicle-maker Commer and later for Ford in Essex.

There he worked on the first Escort and Capri models before moving with his boss, Roy Haynes, to the BMC plant at Cowley near Oxford. Relocating to Longbridge in 1970, Mann became the chief stylist. He later helped to design the Metro and Maestro before leaving in 1983 to become a freelance designer for Honda, Suzuki, Subaru, BMW, Lotus and MG Rover. At a dinner party he met a nursery nurse, the former Anne Harman. They married in 1969. She predeceased him. Their children, Nathan, Laura and Hannah, an interior designer, survive him.

The Allegro's reputation was partly rehabilitated in recent years as enthusiasts urged a reappraisal of its dubious charms. Mann, who also designed a popular plastic garden watering can, was treated as something of a celebrity at classic car shows. "When I look back on my career, it's been fun," he told Gunn. "It's such a pity that it ran through the period of discontent at British Leyland. It's hard to stake your claim in this country and get the rewards you get in other countries. That said, I never went off it."

Harris Mann, car stylist, was born on April 27, 1938. He died on August 14, 2023, aged 85

Samuel Wurzelbacher

American 'Everyman' dubbed 'Joe the Plumber' by Republicans during Barack Obama's 2008 presidential election campaign

Three weeks before the US presidential election of 2008, Barack Obama was campaigning in a working-class suburb of Toledo, Ohio, when a burly, shaven-headed man pushed through the crowd to ask him a question.

Samuel Wurzelbacher, who used his middle name of Joseph and called himself Joe, explained that he was planning to buy the plumbing company he worked for, and that the company made between $250,000 and $280,000 a year. "Your new tax plan is going to tax me more, isn't it?" he said. Obama was "killing the American dream" by hobbling small businesses, he suggested.

As the news cameras rolled, Obama launched into a long, detailed explanation of how his redistributive tax plan would help people such as Wurzelbacher by making everyone better off, not just the wealthy.

He explained in vain. In the final presidential debate three days later John McCain, Obama's Republican opponent, seized on his rival's exchange with the man he dubbed "Joe the Plumber" and accused the Illinois senator of pursuing "socialist" taxation policies that would clobber hard-working Americans. In the course of the 90-minute debate the candidates invoked "Joe the Plumber" two dozen times, and by the end of it Wurzelbacher had been transformed into the American "Everyman" at the heart of the presidential contest.

Overnight he became a media celebrity. His story was seized on by conservative commentators. He appeared at campaign rallies with McCain, as well as in his campaign advertisements. T-shirts proclaimed "Vote Joe the Plumber '08. No more drips in the White House."

He later ran for Congress, and sought to parlay his fame into fortune through various commercial ventures. But with celebrity came scrutiny, and some unwelcome revelations. It turned out that Wurzelbacher was not a licensed plumber after all, and had never served a proper apprenticeship. The self-styled champion of lower taxation also owed Ohio $1,182 in unpaid taxes, and held views that were far from mainstream.



Wurzelbacher ran for Congress

Samuel Joseph Wurzelbacher was born in Toledo in 1973. His father, Frank, was a disabled war veteran, his mother, Kay, a waitress. He joined the US Air Force after high school, trained in plumbing, and was posted to Alaska and North Dakota.

Discharged in 1996, he returned to Toledo and found work as a plumber's assistant. His marriage to Jennifer Gates ended in divorce after they had had the son, Joey, with whom he was playing football in front of his house the day Obama arrived in the neighbourhood and irrevocably changed his life.

Wurzelbacher confessed that he was "completely flabbergasted" by the attention after the presidential debate. "There's no way I could have gone back to my life once I asked that question. The media wouldn't allow it," he said. "It actually closed down my business for two months after that because media was following me around everywhere. And the last thing a housewife wants is for me to show up with NBC on my butt when she's sitting in her house robe."

In the event, McCain's exploitation of Joe the Plumber proved futile. Obama won that November's election by a handsome margin to become America's first black president.

Wurzelbacher did not return to obscurity after Obama's victory. He took on an agent, gave speeches and appeared on television and radio shows. In 2008 he published a ghostwritten book, *Joe the Plumber: Fighting for the American Dream*.

Embraced by American conservatives, he expressed some extreme views. He told a Christian publication that he had some homosexual friends, but "I wouldn't have them anywhere near my children". He told another interviewer that to stop illegal immigration from Mexico, the US should "put a fence up and start shooting".

In 2012 he was persuaded to run as a Republican for one of Ohio's seats in the US House of Representatives, but was trounced by the Democratic incumbent, Marcy Kaptur.

Wurzelbacher did not help his campaign by opposing gun controls with the argument that German Jews could have defended themselves from the Holocaust had they had guns.

Wurzelbacher eventually returned to full-time work in a Chrysler car factory. He married his second wife, Katie Schanen, with whom he had three more children and moved to Wisconsin.

His widow told the New York Times: "It always amazed him that one question thrust him into the national spotlight."

Samuel Wurzelbacher, "Joe the Plumber", was born on December 3, 1973. He died of pancreatic cancer on August 27, 2023, aged 49

Inns of Court Scholarships

Gray's Inn

2022 Bar Course Scholarships
Albion Richardson Scholarship: George Fattal
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Birkenhead Scholarship: Hana Abas
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Elizabeth Bagaaya Scholarship: Jennifer Raw
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Goldie Scholarship: Sofia Brough, Sophie Clifford, Niamh Connell
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Inner Temple

2022 Bar Course Awards
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Stephen Chapman Award: Alastair Holder Ross
Princess Royal: Daniella Adeluwoye, Daniel Cook, Rita Lourenço Baião Dias, Faith Osifo, Adam Weisz
Major Scholarships: Katie Bacon, Rachel Bill, Alessio Compagnino, Sophie Drake, Sonya Edwards, Allegra Enefer, Rosanna Harrison-Pope, Lara Honour, Samuel Killcross, Jake Long, Armando Martins Brelaz de Castro, Tomas McCabe, Josephine Moreton, Freya Morgan, Maud Mullan, Joshua Neaman, Brogan Riley, Eleanor Schaff, Charles Sinden, Sean Sutherland
Exhibition Awards: Alfred Crowley-Rata, Rosie Shouler-Harris, Eaindra Cho, Andrew Jones, Charlotte Jerram, Megan Bithel-Vaughan, Thomas Rowland, Gabriel Barton-Singer, Oliver Snelgrove, Jamie Arthur, Laura Bell, Henry Fahrenkamp, Benjamin Moodie, Gareth Horrocks, Atiya Kanji, Ruby Turok-Squire, Vilte Pranauskaite, Louis Flood, Anjolaoluwa Alabi, Emily Andrew, Samantha Archer, Morgen Ardouin, Byron Austin, Ciranne Barrass, Emily Bethell, Jack Bickerton, Alexis Boddy, Julia Brechtelsbauer, Niamh Brennan, Ruby Breward, Leon Cording, Julie Davis, Kit De Vriese, Francesca Dickens, Isabel Dutton, Rihab El-Hussain, Lloyd Ellis, Joy Elson, Robyn Emery, Georgia Faulke, Karen Fulton, Roisin Gambroudes, Sophie George-Moore, Emma Germany, Moresal Ghafooryar, Josh Gibson, Mia Gibson, Joseph Godber, Marianne Hardy, Caprice Harper, Declan Harris, Sanjana Hegde, Katharine Higgs, Laura Hildt, Fred Holker, David Horwich, Jo Hughes, Emily Jarron, Matthew Johnson, Jonathan Kilgallon, Joshua Kinsella, Su-Lynn Kok, Anna-Alexia Kotsaki, Yusuf Lahham, Georgina Lane, Thomas Langley, Samuel Larner, Armela Lasku, Jillian Laws, Felix Levay, Kay Lima, Katherine Luckhurst, Appin Mackay-Champion, Joseph Maggs, Daniel Mander, Grace Martins, Natalie Mason-Bass, Payel Mazumdar, Cressida McGill, Tess McGovern, Connor Mew, Wayne Miller, Lucy Moran, Rachel Mottershead, Bradley Murphy, Natasha Niccolls, Konstantina Nouka, Charlotte ODonnell, Maria Odueyingbo, Shiloni Osuchukwu, Holly Parker, Lucie Penn, Katy Phillips-Farmer, Isabella Ponsonby, Annie Purcell, Moghda Qadery, Abbey Robertson, Deia Russell-Smith, Chatura Saravanan, Marianne Schonle, Finn Selman, Khola Shah, Caitlin Sheard, Nobuhle Sibanda, Imogen Smalley, Fatima Soomro, Caleb Suggitt, Harriet Summerhayes, Victoria Taylor, Jessie Taylor, Holly Twist, Oana Uta, Hayley Webster, Reece Williams, Roheema Yasmin
2022 GDL Awards
Princess Royal: Ilona Roberts, Finn Judge
Major Scholarships: Alex Coombs, Alex Ewing, Charlotte Gamble, Nelli Kichigina
Exhibition Awards: Weronika Betta, Kinza Bungish, Ruari Clark, Charles Coverman, Robert Durdin, Niamh Foley, John Good, Conor Hogan, Isabel Holt, Sarah John, Richard Jones, Iza Kashif, Leo Kirby, Oskar Luong, Laura Maxwell, James Miller, Devina Mohanlal, Alice Morley, Helena Nugent, William Robinson, Geneva Roy, Aisling Sims, Hazrat Umar, Lucy Walch, Samuel Wall, Emily Whewell

Lincoln's Inn

2022 Bar Course Scholarships
Lord Mansfield: Kyle Bonnell, Jack Brady, Elena Casale, Madeleine Lusted, Firdaus Mohandas, Blánaid Ni Chearnaigh, Roshan Panesar, Cameron Wallis, Chun To Chloe Yeung
Lord Denning: Kikelomo Grace Agunbiade, Sylvie Grace Armstrong, Isabel Aughterson, Kieran Bailey, Jan Mary Baloyo, Ishaan Bhardwaj, Eleanor Brambell, Charles Brooks, Samuel Burns, Marika Cash, Yui Yin Alvin Cheung, Owain Cooke, James Cox, James Cronin, Richard Darby, Charles Denney, James Dix, Gwen Edmunds, Aidan Ferguson, Eleanor Ford, Jack Furness, William Gelley, Cameron Glynn, Thomas Griffiths, Angus Groom, Natasha Hardaker, Nicholas Harris, Celia Hart, Joshua Hillis, Saphra Amelia Hogden, David Illingworth, Ananya Jain, Jacqueline Jan, Naomi Kilcoyne, Nicholas Kilford, Joseph Lavery, Nam Hin Dominic Li, Honor Loveridge, Elisabetta Mainwaring, Keiron McCabe, James Mee, Aaron Mills, Blaise Morris, William Nash, Alyssa Nathanson-Tanner, Jordhi Nullatamby, Elizabeth Park, Lawrence Rainford, Kiyara Raju Sen, Eden Smith, Alex Spencer, Katie Stephens, Cher-Yi Tan, Hannah Taylor, Anastasiia Tolmacheva, Louis Triggs, Charanian Udayabhaskar Reddy,Annika Weis, Felicity Wood, Daniel Woon
Marchant: Ariba Fatima
Tancred: Claudia Hyde
Cassel: Uzair Ali, Thomas Ames, Mirza Sameer Baig, Michael Blackley, William Heath, Anna Mechlinska, Matthew Pugh, Max (Gregory) Shock, Gabriel Tan, Lucy Taylor, Jessica Young
Droop: Georgina Allsopp, Mary Collingridge, Amelia-Rose Edwards, Zackary George, Emily Griffiths, Eloise Hewson, Yordan Kyurkchiyski, Thomas Lam, J Ockenden, Ronan Pandit, Michael Rooney, Zoe Vanhegan, Agnes Inger Woolley
Kennedy: Madeleine Allison, Thomas Bannister, Ella Burt, Latanya Gordon, Osaid Khan, Joshua Matthews, Lina Petrovska, Lydia Reed, Junaid Saleem, Amelia Smith, Emma Szlachetko, Chloe Wilkes
Mary MacMurray: Adrianne Allwood-Bennett
Sir Thomas More: Ilsu Erdem Ari, Fraser Barnstaple, Allana Bennison, Sadia Binte Zaman, Megan Eckley, Matthew Freeman, Poppy Hill, Emily Lennon, Michael Nguyen-Kim, Thomas Rylatt, Priya Kaur Sohanpal, Jaya Sudera
2022 GDL Scholarships
Lord Bowen: Louis Helsby, Daisy Holland, Joseph Kay, William Kitchen, Samuel Lane, Raphael Marshall, Charlie Pottle, Kavya Sharma, Rustan Smart, Juliet Smith
Lord Haldane: Nandini Bulchandani, Rhea Gupta, Cameron Roberts, Ella Higgs-Sharrock, William Hunter, Stephanos Iossifidis, Samuel Marde Mehdiabad, Jack Mitchell, Iason Pafitis, Lucy Stock
Lord Brougham: Solal Bauer, Nathaniel Bor, Ronahi Bozarslan, Marcos Castella, Natalia Catechis, James Cazot, Toby Ferrison, Lauren Slade, Isabella Stefani, George Tomlinson, Nicholas West, Reyss Wheeler

Middle Temple

2022 Bar Course Awards
The Queen's Scholarship: Adam Brown
Queen Mother Scholarships: Lara Bird-Leakey, Luke Broadway, Farhana Iqbal, Hugh Jeffery, Georgina Kemsley-Pein, Jasmine Knapman, Dana McGibbon, Samuel Mitchinson, Anjali Narbheram, Sean O'Neill, Isabella Priestman-Bennett, Harry Sanderson, Adam Stachniewski, Thomas Swain, Rahul Wijewardane, Rachel Wilson, Arthur Wong, Isaac Lok Wang Wong
Duke & Duchess of Cambridge Scholarships: Wasim Iqbal, Wajma Zazai
Diana, Princess of Wales Scholarship: Victoria Earnshaw
Astbury Scholarships: Poppy Blackshaw, Laura Bramall, Roisin Finnegan, Ella Fogg, William Foulkes, Anna Gatrell, Sophie Hanson, Richard Ridyard, Nana Afua Sarfo-Bonsu, Adhiti Shenava, Calvert St Hill
Diplock Scholarships: Ava Chowdhury-Turner, Sarah Daniel, Gregor Donaldson, Oussama El Fatihi, Panayiotis Heliotis, Isabella Hibbert-Robinson, Timothy Hutchinson, Caspar Latham, Rachel Morgan, Timothy Reeves, Claire Otto, Ashika Singh, Lucy Walton
Harmsworth Scholarships: Marie Agyare-Wiseborn, Christian Ariwa, Lidia Beqiraj, Joseph Brittan, Marcus Coore, Amelia Fragola-Hunt, Emily Higlett, Zihang Liu, Susan Oduleye, Lufu Si, Noreen Siddique
Jules Thorn Scholarships: Romaysa Akhter, Skye Blackshaw, Sadia Shabnum Bibi, Lucia Caveliere, Lois Connelly, Sophie Cullis, Megan Harriman, Susan Guest, Gian Lorenzo Leoni, Elisenda Mitchell, William O'Hara, Oluwaseajomi Okunribido, Michaela Onuchukwu, Eleanor Tack
Benefactors Scholarships: Olivia Currie, Jenna Gayle, Tia Simpson, Emily Wilson
Blackstone Scholarship: Jasleen Chaggar
Brick Court Chambers Scholarship: Claudia Saxton
Christopher Benson Scholarship: Benjamin Denton-Cardew
Cunningham Scholarship: Emily Balls
Gardiner Scholarship: Isobel Weston
Godfrey Heilpern Memorial Scholarship: Javahir Fatima Askari
H R Light Scholarship: Hannah Kenney-Hodgson
Helena Normanton QC Scholarship: Emma Snell
HHJ Paul Clark Scholarship: Isabella Brunton
Hubert Munroe Scholarship: Daniel Harvey
J B Montagu Scholarship: Lauren Skinner
Jamieson Scholarship: Georgie Dibbo
Jerry Parthab Singh Scholarship: Edward Phillips
Joseph Jackson Scholarship: Natasha Allen
Leolin Price QC Scholarship: Anna Mould
Luboshez Scholarship: Charlin Skeete
Malcolm Wright Scholarship: Fiona Anderson
Melissa McDermott Scholarship: Niall Robinson
Mona De Piro Scholarship: Lucy Blue
Nicholas Pumfrey Memorial Scholarship: Rebecca Moon
Pump Court Tax Chambers Scholarship: Morgan Williams
Quartercentenary Scholarship: Oscar Robins
Readers' Scholarship: Gabriel Kocjancic Nelson
Robert Garraway Rice Scholarship: Kian Hearnshaw
Rosina Hare Scholarship: Deborah Bowen
Safford Scholarship: Amir Al-Monsur
Sir Joseph Cantley Memorial Scholarship: Jessica Foster
Sir Robert Micklethwait Memorial Scholarship: Millicent North
Stanley Levy Memorial Scholarship: Estelle Lluch
State School Scholarship: David Horvath-Franco
Terence Fitzgerald Scholarship: Lucy Finney
The Lowry Calvert Scholarship: Harry Smith
The Rose Scholarship: Paula Scarff
The South Square Scholarship: Harrison Engler
Winston Churchill Scholarship: Georgina Pressidee
2022 GDL Awards
Queen Mother Scholarships: Ben Daly-Jones, Iona McNeill
Diplock Scholarship: Nicholas Haddad, Hayley Holt
Harmsworth Scholarships: Thea Edwards, Matthew Haji-Michael
Jules Thorn Scholarships: Beltran Field, Oliver Taylor
Benefactors Scholarships: Liam Armstrong, Andre Barrette-Moore, Andrew Ormond, Joy Tarre

● The Times has agreed to publish this list of last year's scholars belatedly as it was not supplied to the paper at the time. We intend to publish the full list of 2023 scholars in October.

Births, Marriages and Deaths

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And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience. Luke 8.14-15 (ESV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

MARTIN on 1st September 2023 to Victoria and Jack, a son, Max Maurice.

Forthcoming Marriages

MR D. M. GORE AND MISS A. D. INSTONE
The engagement is announced between Marcus, son of the late Mr and Mrs Thomas Sinclair Gore of Co. Down, and Antonia, daughter of Mr Tim Instone of Bath and Mrs Maud Instone of Braintree.

MR J. H. WRIGLEY AND MISS L. A. RUCK KEENE
The engagement is announced between Jack, son of Mr Patrick Wrigley of Diddlebury, Shropshire, and the late Mrs Lucinda Wrigley, and Lucia, youngest daughter of Mrs Tania Ruck Keene of Bletchington, Oxfordshire, and the late Mr David Ruck Keene.

MR O. M. J. MUNCEY AND MISS E. C. PRESTON
The engagement is announced between Oliver, son of Mr and Mrs Andrew Muncey of Aldeburgh, Suffolk, and Emma, daughter of Mrs John Preston of Wandsworth, London, and the late Mr John Preston.

Marriages

MR W. J. GRAHAM AND MISS C. E. BLACK
The marriage took place on 2nd September 2023, at All Souls Langham Place, between Will and Chloe.

Anniversaries

GERSHON : KNOBLE
My darling Ronit, happy silver wedding. I love you to the Warri Pier and back. Pudgie xxxxx

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
To place notices for these sections please call 020 7481 4000

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 11.30am three days prior to insertion



Court Circular



Balmoral Castle
5th September, 2023
The Queen this morning officially opened Fish Shop restaurant and fishmongers, 3 Netherley Place, Ballater, Aberdeenshire.

Deaths

CLARK
Fiona McKenzie (née MILL) died peacefully on 5th August 2023, aged 85. Fiona died at home cared for by her daughters and district nurses. The adored wife of Charles (died 6th October 2006), mother of Catriona, Rachel, Charli and Alex, grandmother of ten and great-grandmother of four. Also devoted to her wider family, a volunteer for many causes and a proud Londoner. At Fiona's request, there will be no funeral. There will be a family celebration of life in due course.

MACEY Eric. Air Vice Marshal Eric H Macey OBE died peacefully at home on 27th August, aged 87, after a short illness. He had lived an active, fulfilling and interesting life, much of it devoted to the service of his country and the local community. He will be missed by his family and by all who knew, laughed, worked and played with him. No flowers but donations in his memory to be sent to Salisbury District Hospital Stars Appeal: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/salisburyhc9

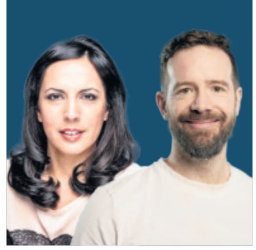
VANNECK Elizabeth. Service of thanksgiving, originally 12th September, postponed to 17th October at 11.30am. Church of St Simon Zelotes, London SW3.

WALLEN Barbara Mary (née Odling-Smee) on 19th August 2023, aged 88. Mary passed away peacefully at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. The funeral will be held at Pershore Abbey on September 12th at 12.30pm and the interment will be in Lappträsk, Finland, in summer 2024.

Appointments

WEST SUSSEX LIEUTENANCY The following have been appointed Deputy Lieutenants for the County of West Sussex: Mrs Marilyn Le Feuvre; Commodore Michael Mansergh, CBE; Mrs Olivia Pinkney, CBE, QPM.

TIMES RADIO
Join us for breakfast
Listen to Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell on Times Radio, Monday to Thursday at 6am



Legal Notices

HEADBOROUGH ESTATES LIMITED
Company Number: 01352341
Principal Trading Address: c/o Summit House, 170 Finchley Road, London, NW3 6BP
Notice is hereby given, that creditors of the Company are required, on or before 1 October 2023, to prove their debts by delivering their proofs (in the format specified in Rule 14.4 of the Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016) to the Joint Liquidators at KRE Corporate Recovery Limited, Unit 8 The Aquarium, 1-7 King Street, Reading, Berks RG1 2AN or info@krecr.co.uk. If so required by notice from the Joint Liquidators, creditors must produce any document or other evidence which the Joint Liquidators consider is necessary to substantiate the whole or any part of a claim. **Note: The Directors of the Company have made a declaration of solvency and it is expected that all creditors will be paid in full.** Date of Appointment: 1 September 2023. Office Holder Details: Rob Keyes and Paul Ellison both of KRE Corporate Recovery Limited, Unit 8, The Aquarium, 1-7 King Street, Reading, Berks, RG1 2AN. For further details contact: The Joint Liquidators, Email: info@krecr.co.uk, Tel: 01189 479090. Alternative contact: Lee Lloyd.
Rob Keyes, Joint Liquidator
Dated: 1 September 2023

High Court of Justice
Business and Property Courts of England and Wales
Court Case No: CR-2023-004729
APEX BSJ LIMITED
Company Number: 02110252
Nature of Business: Manufacture of other builders' carpentry and joinery & Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles. Registered Office: 120-124 Towngate, Leyland, PR25 2LQ. Principal Trading Address: Baylham, Lower Street, Needham Market, Suffolk IP6 8JP. Date of Appointment: 29 August 2023. Names and Address of Administrators: Andy John (IP No. 20896) and Dane O'Hara (IP No. 28550) both of Leonard Curtis, 5th Floor, Grove House, 248a Marylebone Road, London, NW1 6BB. Further details contact: The Joint Administrators, Tel: 020 7535 7000,
Email: recovery@leonardcurtis.co.uk.
Alternative contact: Jeremy Edward

Notice of Acceptance of an Application for a Development Consent Order for Gatwick Airport Northern Runway

Application Reference: TR020005

Notice under Section 56 Planning Act 2008, Regulation 9 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 and Regulation 16 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Notice is hereby given that an application for a Development Consent Order under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 has been made by Gatwick Airport Limited (company number: 01991018) (the "Applicant") of registered office; 5th Floor, Destinations Place, Gatwick Airport, Gatwick, West Sussex, RH6 0NP to the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of the State) (the "Application"). The Application was made on 06 July 2023 and accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 03 August 2023 (Application Reference: TR020005). The Application is for the proposed Gatwick Airport Northern Runway project (the "Project").

Summary of the Project

The Project proposes alterations to the existing northern runway at London Gatwick Airport (Gatwick) which, along with lifting the current restrictions on its use, would enable dual runway operations. Together with the alterations to the northern runway, the Project would include the development of a range of infrastructure and facilities to allow increased airport passenger numbers and aircraft operations.

The Project includes amendments to the existing northern runway and corresponding enhancements to the taxiway system and parking stands to accommodate an increase in aircraft movements. Other elements of the Project would enable the increased airfield capacity to be accessed by passengers through additional processing capability and improved airport access. Land is proposed to be used to mitigate environmental effects (for example, for habitat creation, flood compensation or provision of recreational routes and public open space).

As an overview, the Project includes the following key components;

- repositioning the centreline of the existing northern runway 12 metres further north to enable dual runway operations;
- reconfiguration of taxiways;
- pier and stand alterations (including a new pier);
- reconfiguration of specific airfield facilities;
- extensions to the existing airport terminals (north and south);
- provision of additional hotel and office space;
- provision of reconfigured car parking, including new car parks;
- surface access (including highway) improvements;
- demolition and relocation of Central Area Recycling Enclosure (CARE) facility;
- provision of an additional water treatment facility;
- reconfiguration of existing utilities, including surface water, foul drainage and power; and
- landscape/ecological planting and the creation of environmental mitigation.

The Project will also seek authorisation for the compulsory acquisition of land and interests in land, the acquisition of rights and imposition of restrictive covenants and statutory authority to override easements and other rights and private rights of way.

The Project is a nationally significant infrastructure project ("NSIP") for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act") under sections 14(1)(i) of the 2008 Act, and 23(1)(b), (4), (5) and (6) of the 2008 Act, and the proposed works to highways which would comprise part of the Project are classified as an NSIP under sections 14(1)(h) and 22(1)(b), (3) and (4) of the 2008 Act.

The Project is located on land within and adjacent to Gatwick Airport. A map showing the location of the Project can be viewed online on the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway page of the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website at:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR020005/TR020005-000804-4.1%20Location%20Plan%20-%20Not%20For%20Approval.pdf

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Project is Environmental Impact Assessment development, as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and, accordingly, an Environmental Statement accompanies the Application.

Application Form and accompanying documents

The Application form and its accompanying documents, drawings, plans and maps, including the Environmental Statement and draft Development Consent Order, are available to view electronically and download, free of charge, under the "Documents" tab on the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway page of the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website, being a website maintained by or on behalf of the Secretary of State: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/gatwick-airport-northern-runway/?ipcsection=docs.

The Application Documents will be available to view online at least until the end of the Relevant Representation period at 23.59 on 29 October 2023.

The Application Documents are available for electronic inspection via computer free of charge at the following venues and times set out below. These documents will be available to view at least until the end of the Relevant Representation period at 23:59 on 29 October 2023.

Venue	Opening Hours
Crawley Library Southgate Avenue, Crawley, RH10 6HG	**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday: 9.00am - 6.00pm Saturday: 9.00am - 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**
Broadfield Library 46 Broadfield Place, Crawley, RH11 9BA	**Opening hours:** Monday to Friday: 10.00am - 5.00pm Saturday: 10.00am - 2.00pm Sunday: Closed
Horsham Library Lower Tanbridge Way, Horsham, RH12 1PJ	**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday: 9.00am - 6.00pm Saturday: 9.00am - 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**
Billingshurst Library Mill Lane, Billingshurst, RH14 9JZ	**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday: 10.00am - 5.00pm Saturday: 10.00am - 2.00pm Sunday: Closed
East Grinstead Library 32-40 West Street, East Grinstead, RH19 4SR	**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday: 9.30am - 6.00pm Saturday: 9.30am - 5.00pm Sunday: Closed
Haywards Heath Library 34 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1BN	**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday: 9.30am - 6.00pm Saturday: 9.30am - 5.00pm Sunday: Closed
Oxted Library 12 Gresham Road, Oxted, RH8 0BQ	**Opening Hours:** Monday: Closed Tuesday – Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**
Caterham Valley Library Stafford Road, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6JG	**Opening Hours**: Monday: Closed Tuesday – Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm Sunday: Closed
Dorking Library St Martin's Walk, Dorking RH4 1UT	**Opening hours:** Monday to Friday: 9.30am - 5.30pm Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm Sunday: Closed
Leatherhead Library The Mansion, Church Street, Leather-head, KT22 8DP	**Opening Hours:** Monday: Closed Tuesday – Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**

Horley Library 55-57 Russell Square, Victoria Road, Horley, RH6 7QH	**Opening Hours:** Monday: Closed Tuesday – Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**
Redhill Library Warwick Quadrant, Redhill, RH1 1NN	**Opening Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9.30am – 5.00pm Tuesday and Thursday: 9.30am – 7.00pm Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm **Sunday: Closed**
Jubilee Library Jubilee Street, Brighton, BN1 1GE	**Opening Hours:** Monday - Saturday: 10.00am - 5.00pm Sunday: 11.00am – 5.00pm
Westdene Library 24 Bankside, Brighton, BN1 5GN	**Opening Hours:** Monday – Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm Saturday: 9.30am – 5.00pm Sunday: 11.00am – 5.00pm
Tunbridge Wells Library The Amelia, Civic Way, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1JN	**Opening Hours:** Monday – Wednesday and Friday: 9.00am – 6.00pm Thursday: 9.00am – 8.00pm Saturday: 9.00am – 5.00pm Sunday: 10.00am – 4.00pm
Edenbridge Library The Eden Centre, Four Elms Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6BY	**Opening Hours:** Monday: 9.00am – 1.00pm Tuesday to Thursday: 9.00am – 5.00pm Friday: 1.00pm – 5.00pm Saturday: 10.00am – 3.00pm Sunday: Closed
Sevenoaks Library Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, TN13 1LQ	**Opening Hours:** Monday: 10.00am – 6.00pm Tuesday – Friday: 10.00am – 5.00pm Saturday: 10.00am – 4.00pm Sunday: Closed
Hailsham Library Western Road, Hailsham, BN27 3DN	**Opening Hours:** Monday and Tuesday: 12.00pm – 5.00pm Wednesday: Closed Thursday: 10.00am – 6.00pm Friday and Saturday: 10.00am – 5.00pm Sunday: Closed
Lewes Library Styles Field, Friars Walk, Lewes, BN7 2LZ	Monday and Tuesday: 10.00pm – 2.00pm Wednesday: Closed Thursday: 10.00am – 6.00pm Friday and Saturday: 10.00am – 5.00pm Sunday: Closed

On request, an electronic copy of the Application documents can be supplied free of charge on a USB memory stick which will be limited to one USB per household or business. Contact details to request the USB can be found at the end of this notice. You can also contact the Applicant using these contact details if you have any enquiries in relation to the Application form and its accompanying documents, plans and maps.

The complete set of Application documents can be made available in hard copy format on request at a cost of £4,500. Copies of individual documents are also available on request and a reasonable printing charge may apply. The Applicant will also consider any reasonable requests for bespoke or hard copy document formats and will accommodate such requests where it is feasible to do so and for which a reasonable charge may apply. In relation to any request, please contact the Applicant using the contact details set out at the end of this notice.

Making a representation

Any person may make representations on the Application to the Secretary of State (including giving notice of any interest in, comment on, objection to or support for the Application). All representations relating to the Application must be made on the Planning Inspectorate's Registration and Relevant Representation Form and give the grounds on which it is made.

The Registration and Relevant Representation Form will be made available by the Planning Inspectorate. The form can be found on the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway page for the Application via the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/gatwick-airport-northern-runway/?ipcsection=overview

The Planning Inspectorate has issued detailed advice on making and registering a relevant representation and becoming an Interested Party, to which you should have regard. This Advice Note (8.2 - How to Register to Participate in an Examination) is published on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website under 'Legislation and Advice' and can be found at: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-8-2-how-to-register-to-participate-in-an-examination/

If you require guidance on obtaining or completing the Registration and Relevant Representation Form or you are unable to complete the form online and you would like to register your interest and/or request a hard copy, please telephone the Planning Inspectorate on **0303 444 5000** quoting the name of the Application and the Planning Inspectorate's reference number TR020005.

Any Registration and Relevant Representation Form must be received by the Planning Inspectorate no later than 23:59 on 29 October 2023.

All representations must include details of the maker's name, address and telephone number, along with an outline of the points intended to be made at the examination stage. Please ensure that you quote reference number TR020005 in all correspondence with the Planning Inspectorate about the Application.

Please note that any submitted representations to the Planning Inspectorate will be published on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website for the Application and will be subject to their privacy policy which can be viewed at: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/help/privacy-and-cookie/.

A completed hard copy form to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate should be sent to:
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Regulation (EU) No 598/2014

The Project includes proposals for a noise envelope which may constitute a new noise 'operating restriction' as defined under Regulation (EU) No 598/2014. The Application includes in Annex 1 to Appendix 17.9.5: Air Noise Envelope Background (Examination Library Document reference number: APP-175) a summary of the relevant requirements of Articles 5 and 6 of Regulation 598, how the noise envelope proposal accords with the rules on the introduction of aircraft operating restrictions provided for by Regulation 598 and how noise assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Article 6 of Regulation 598. Details of the noise envelope which may constitute the new noise operating restriction are contained within Appendix 17.9.7: Air Noise Envelope (Examination Library Document reference number: APP-177). Pursuant to Article 6 of Regulation 598, the Secretary of State is required to ensure that a process of consultation is carried out in relation to the proposed imposition of any new noise operating restrictions. All persons who are required to be consulted pursuant to Article 6 have been provided with a copy of this notice. Representations on the proposed noise envelope are sought and will be considered by the Secretary of State through the course of the examination of the Application and prior to any decision on the Application being taken.

Applicant's contact details

For further information about the Application, or to request copies of documents, the Applicant can be contacted by using the following details:

Telephone: 01293 505 265

Email: community@gatwickairport.com

Post: Northern Runway Project Team
Destinations Place
South Terminal
Gatwick Airport
West Sussex
RH6 0NP

Any details you provide to the Applicant via telephone or e-mail will be subject to its privacy policy linked here: https://www.gatwickairport.com/privacy-policy/ and will be treated confidentially and processed and handled in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation.

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Inside	~~£1,749~~	**£1,649**
Ocean View	~~£2,199~~	**£2,039**
*FREE UPGRADE TO BALCONY STATEROOM^*		
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Today Staying dry across most of Britain and Ireland with sunny spells, hot in the south. Max 33C (91F), min 11C (52F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder *=previous day **=data not available

	Temp C midday yesterday		Rain mm 24 hrs to 5pm yesterday	Sun hr*
Aberdeen	20	S	0.0	12.3
Aberporth	24	S	0.0	12.0
Anglesey	23	S	0.0	12.2
Aviemore	19	S	0.0	10.2
Barnstaple	26	S	0.0	**
Bedford	25	S	0.0	**
Belfast	21	S	0.0	12.0
Birmingham	24	S	0.0	**
Bournemouth	27	S	0.0	12.3
Bridlington	21	S	0.0	**
Bristol	24	S	0.0	11.9
Camborne	22	S	0.0	9.8
Cardiff	24	S	0.0	12.0
Edinburgh	20	S	0.0	12.5
Eskdalemuir	22	S	0.0	7.8
Glasgow	22	S	0.0	7.3
Hereford	24	S	0.0	**
Herstmonceux	26	S	0.0	9.2
Ipswich	24	S	0.0	12.3
Isle of Man	23	S	0.0	12.6
Isle of Wight	26	S	0.0	**
Jersey	25	**	0.0	11.8
Keswick	25	S	0.0	**
Kinloss	17	S	0.0	12.8
Leeds	22	S	0.0	**
Lerwick	15	PC	2.4	0.0
Leuchars	17	S	0.0	11.9
Lincoln	25	S	0.0	11.8
Liverpool	26	S	0.0	**
London	26	S	0.0	11.3
Lyneham	23	S	0.0	12.3
Manchester	26	S	0.0	12.2
Margate	25	**	0.0	12.4
Milford Haven	23	S	0.0	**
Newcastle	21	S	0.0	**
Nottingham	23	S	0.0	12.3
Orkney	14	D	0.0	7.9
Oxford	26	S	0.0	**
Plymouth	23	S	0.0	**
Portland	22	S	0.0	**
Scilly, St Mary's	19	S	1.2	**
Shoreham	26	S	0.0	11.2
Shrewsbury	23	S	0.0	11.9
Snowdonia	22	S	0.0	**
Southend	24	S	0.2	12.4
South Uist	17	PC	0.0	**
Stornoway	17	S	0.0	0.7
Tiree	19	S	0.0	3.2
Whitehaven	23	S	0.0	12.3
Wick	15	D	0.2	**
Yeovilton	26	S	0.0	8.5

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

Alicante	28	PC	Madeira	26	PC
Amsterdam	27	S	Madrid	24	PC
Athens	23	T	Malaga	29	S
Auckland	18	B	Mallorca	32	PC
Bahrain	38	S	Malta	28	PC
Bangkok	33	PC	Melbourne	11	SH
Barbados	32	PC	Mexico City	25	C
Barcelona	27	S	Miami	32	C
Beijing	30	S	Milan	23	B
Beirut	30	S	Mombasa	29	PC
Belgrade	24	S	Montreal	27	PC
Berlin	26	S	Moscow	21	PC
Bermuda	27	PC	Mumbai	32	S
Bordeaux	32	S	Munich	22	S
Brussels	28	S	Nairobi	25	B
Bucharest	26	S	Naples	28	PC
Budapest	25	S	New Orleans	26	T
Buenos Aires	11	S	New York	29	B
Cairo	36	S	Nice	27	S
Calcutta	29	R	Nicosia	31	PC
Canberra	17	S	Oslo	23	S
Cape Town	13	B	Paris	30	S
Chicago	33	PC	Perth	18	SH
Copenhagen	22	S	Prague	22	S
Corfu	25	B	Reykjavik	12	C
Delhi	35	S	Riga	22	PC
Dubai	37	S	Rio de Janeiro	32	S
Dublin	21	B	Riyadh	41	S
Faro	25	PC	Rome	30	S
Florence	28	S	San Francisco	21	PC
Frankfurt	26	S	Santiago	13	C
Geneva	27	S	São Paulo	30	S
Gibraltar	26	S	Seoul	31	PC
Helsinki	19	B	Seychelles	27	SH
Hong Kong	30	SH	Singapore	31	PC
Honolulu	29	PC	St Petersburg	19	C
Istanbul	27	B	Stockholm	19	S
Jerusalem	34	S	Sydney	23	S
Johannesburg	26	S	Tel Aviv	34	S
Kuala Lumpur	31	PC	Tenerife	25	B
Kyiv	**	**	Tokyo	32	PC
Lanzarote	25	B	Vancouver	18	PC
Las Palmas	27	PC	Venice	27	S
Lima	19	C	Vienna	23	PC
Lisbon	23	PC	Warsaw	23	S
Los Angeles	23	PC	Washington	36	PC
Luxor	37	S	Zurich	24	S

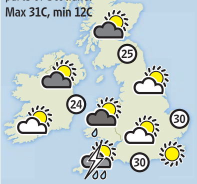
Five days ahead

Hot and humid in central and eastern areas, rain and thunderstorms in the west

Tomorrow

Dry and hot with sunny spells in central, southern and eastern areas. Cloudier with a few showers or thunderstorms in the west and across parts of Scotland.

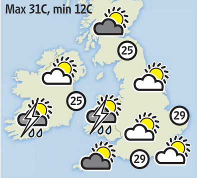
Max 31C, min 12C



Friday

Mainly dry, hot and humid across central and eastern England. Isolated thunderstorms across Wales, southwestern England and Ireland. Mostly dry and warm in Scotland.

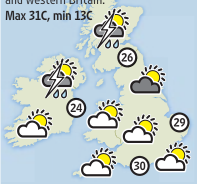
Max 31C, min 12C



Saturday

Another mostly dry, hot and humid day across much of England and Wales. Isolated showers and thunderstorms across parts of Ireland and northern and western Britain.

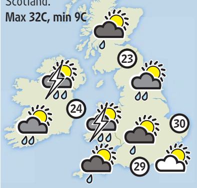
Max 31C, min 13C



Sunday

Hot and humid with isolated showers and thunderstorms in England and Wales. Widespread rain and thunderstorms across Ireland and Scotland.

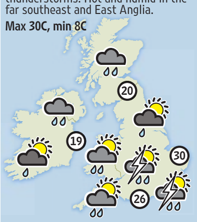
Max 32C, min 9C



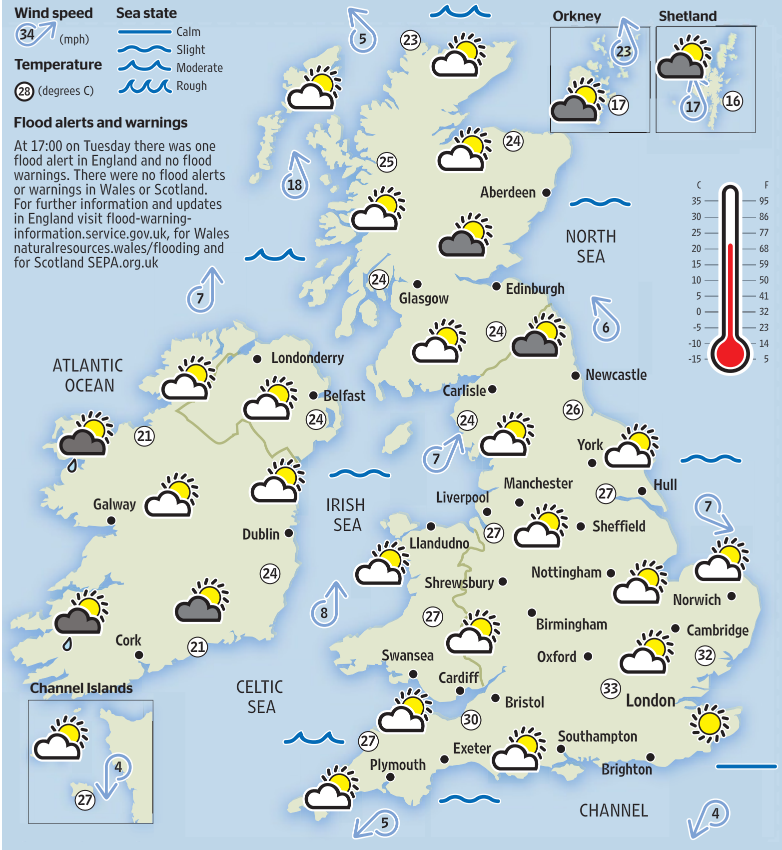
Monday

Unsettled with widespread rain and thunderstorms. Hot and humid in the far southeast and East Anglia.

Max 30C, min 8C



The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest



Flood alerts and warnings

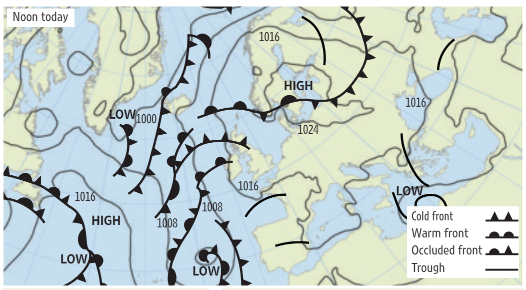
At 17:00 on Tuesday there was one flood alert in England and no flood warnings. There were no flood alerts or warnings in Wales or Scotland. For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk

General situation: Mostly dry and sunny, hot in the south.
London, SE Eng, Cen S Eng, E Anglia: Any early mist and fog patches clearing to leave a dry, hot day with long spells of sunshine. Light and variable winds. Maximum 33C (91F), minimum 14C (57F).
E Eng, SW Eng, Channel Is, Midlands: Early mist clearing to leave a dry day with long spells of sunshine, hazy at times and hot inland. Light and variable winds. Maximum 31C (88F), minimum 14C (57F).
Wales, NW Eng, Cen N Eng: A dry day with long spells of sunshine and some low cloud and fog patches near the coast in Anglesey. Light and variable winds. Maximum 28C (82F), minimum 15C (59F).
NE Eng, Borders, Lake District, Edinburgh and Dundee, Cen Highland, Glasgow, IoM: Dry with sunny spells. Light southeasterly winds, becoming variable in places. Maximum 26C (79F), minimum 11C (52F).
Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, N Isles, NW Scotland, SW Scotland, Argyll: Dry with sunny spells and some coastal fog patches. Moderate southeasterly winds, fresh in the Northern Isles. Maximum 26C (79F), minimum 11C (52F).
Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Mainly dry with sunny spells and patchy cloud. A few showers in far western areas during the afternoon. Light to moderate southerly winds. Maximum 25C (77F), minimum 13C (55F).

Tides

Tidal predictions. Heights in metres

Today		Ht		Ht
Aberdeen	06:25	4.0	19:02	3.6
Avonmouth	--:--	--	12:05	11.6
Belfast	04:11	3.4	16:43	3.2
Cardiff	11:51	10.7	--:--	--
Devonport	10:43	4.9	22:53	4.7
Dover	03:59	6.2	16:20	6.2
Dublin	--:--	--	--:--	--
Falmouth	10:09	4.6	22:27	4.4
Greenock	05:17	3.5	17:34	3.2
Harwich	04:42	3.7	16:51	3.8
Holyhead	03:14	5.2	15:41	4.8
Hull	11:15	7.1	23:38	6.3
Leith	07:46	5.1	20:18	4.8
Liverpool	03:56	8.6	16:19	8.1
London Bridge	06:53	6.5	19:06	6.7
Lowestoft	02:25	2.3	14:35	2.5
Milford Haven	11:14	6.0	23:41	5.8
Morecambe	04:08	8.7	16:31	8.0
Newhaven	03:58	6.1	16:17	6.0
Newquay	10:09	6.1	22:37	5.9
Oban	10:20	3.2	22:58	3.1
Penzance	09:40	4.8	22:05	4.7
Portsmouth	04:37	4.4	17:06	4.4
Shoreham	04:08	5.7	16:30	5.6
Southampton	03:23	4.0	06:13	4.1
Swansea	11:18	8.3	23:44	7.9
Tees	08:44	5.2	21:20	4.7
Weymouth	11:26	1.7	23:49	1.6



Synoptic situation

High pressure centred over southern Scandinavia and low pressure west of Iberia will lead to a hot, humid southerly flow across southern Britain with long spells of sunshine. Some coastal fog patches are possible along the east coast of England and the Irish Sea. Fronts over Ireland and western Scotland will bring cloudier skies and a few isolated showers.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday

Warmest: Wiggonholt, West Sussex, 30.7C
Coldest: Braemar, Aberdeenshire, 1.4C
Wettest: Lerwick, 2.4mm
Sunniest: Kinloss, 12.8hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 06.20
Sun sets: 19.36
Moon rises: 22.12
Moon sets: 16.05 Thu
New Moon: September 15th

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	20:23-05:52
Belfast	20:34-06:11
Birmingham	20:15-05:58
Cardiff	20:19-06:04
Exeter	20:19-06:07
Glasgow	20:29-06:03
Liverpool	20:21-06:01
London	20:07-05:52
Manchester	20:18-05:58
Newcastle	20:17-05:53
Norwich	20:02-05:45
Penzance	20:26-06:15
Sheffield	20:14-05:55

Weather Eye
Paul Simons



After much disappointing weather over the school holidays, it seems like September is trying to make up for it with a late heatwave. The temperature reached 30.2C at Whitechurch in Pembrokeshire on Monday, and is still rising this week. This raises an intriguing prospect — will September record the highest temperature this year? The highest temperature so far was 32.2C in June, and it is just within the realms of possibility that this could be beaten this week. It would be extraordinary to record the hottest day of the year in September, but it has happened before.

Seven years ago a high of 34.4C was recorded at Gravesend in Kent on September 13, which was the highest temperature for the whole of 2016.

And on September 11, 1919 the temperature reached 32.2C at Raunds in Northamptonshire, the hottest day of that year. "Public swimming baths are doing much business and the al fresco luncheon habit in the parks has broken out afresh," remarked The Times.

Does a September heatwave herald fine weather for the rest of the month? Unfortunately the omens are not good. In 2016 the weather over the second half of the month turned more autumnal with temperatures closer to average. Far more extreme was September 1919, when shortly after the heatwave the weather plunged headlong into winter. By September 20 it was so cold that there was widespread snow across the north and higher ground in the south. In Princetown, Dartmoor, it was up to two inches deep. The month ended cold with widespread frost, and remained cold for the rest of the autumn. But strangely, the winter turned largely mild.

So, what are the prospects for the rest of this September? Don't hold your breath for the current heat to carry on because the signs are that by the weekend a cold front will descend from the north and usher in cooler, fresher weather across the whole of the UK by early next week.

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Sport

Gauff shows champion form

Stuart Fraser



Tennis Correspondent, New York

Jelena Ostapenko (Lat, 20)	0	2
Coco Gauff (US, 6)	6	6



SARAH YENESEL/EPA

Gauff is the youngest American to reach the semi-finals since 1999 while Ostapenko, inset, hit out at tournament organisers

US Open

A breakthrough for Coco Gauff on home soil at the US Open was overshadowed by a row over alleged favourable scheduling last night.

Her defeated Latvian opponent Jelena Ostapenko claimed that tournament organisers had left her under the false impression that she would have more time to recover before yesterday's quarter-final.

Gauff, 19, became the youngest American to reach the semi-finals at Flushing Meadows since a 17-year-old Serena Williams in 1999. The No 6 seed needed only 68 minutes to see off the No 20 seed Ostapenko 6-0, 6-2 in the first match of the day on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Ostapenko, 26, was wildly erratic, making 36 unforced errors in the 93-point match. It was a stark contrast from her previous appearance on Sunday night, when she knocked out the world No 1 and defending champion Iga Swiatek from a set down.

Afterwards, Ostapenko blamed her poor performance on a lack of recovery time. Her match against Swiatek had finished at 11.57pm local time on Sunday , meaning that she did not go to bed until 3am on Monday after her various post-match duties. Despite apparent indications that she would play Gauff in Tuesday's night session beginning at 7pm, schedulers placed the match in the first daytime slot of 12 noon.

"The thing was that when I asked the day before, I was pretty sure I'm gonna play the night session because that's what they told me," Ostapenko said. "When the schedule came out [on Monday], I saw I'm playing the first match and was like, 'Wow, that's a little bit strange scheduling.' I was a little bit surprised, not in a really good way.

"I didn't really feel physically very tired, but I felt like I didn't really recover from that night. I got back to the hotel around 2am and I tried to go to sleep at 3am but I had all this adrenaline and it was impossible to fall asleep. Then when you go to sleep at 5am, you need a few days just to recover. I think it's a little bit crazy. Today was not really a good match from me. Yesterday I felt very low energy for the whole day.

"I thought today I was going to wake up and feel better, but honestly I didn't really feel much better. I think it was better for her the schedule, because obviously she played much earlier in the day on Sunday [Gauff finished her fourth-round singles at 5.28pm]."

A spokesman for the US Open insisted that Ostapenko was "not promised" a slot in yesterday's night session by either the tournament director or referee. Gauff acknowledged, however, that Ostapenko had a "valid" point about the lack of recovery time.

"The grand-slam tournaments are tough," Gauff said. "She had to play the second night match [on Sunday]. I don't know what time she practised the next day, but it's definitely a different feeling.

"It definitely plays a factor, maybe more so mentally than physically, because I think physically you have the day in between but mentally these days go by so fast. I definitely can understand that point of view, for sure."

The scheduling controversy aside, Gauff is showing a level of form that could result in her claiming a first grand-slam title on Sunday. Including her success at the Cincinnati Open three weeks ago, she has now won ten consecutive matches.

Under the guidance of her new coaches, Pere Riba and Brad Gilbert, Gauff is showing more composure than ever before on the big stage. She also looks comfortable on both her serve and forehand, two areas of her game that would often break down under pressure in the past.

Understandably, the hype is building in New York around the prospect of Gauff ending the tournament as the champion. The excitement is reminiscent of that created by a young Serena Williams, who was the last American teenager before Gauff to reach the last four of the US Open.

"Serena is the greatest player of all time," Gauff said. "I'm nothing close to that yet. I'm just really honoured to be in the same sentence as her.

"It's something that I'm used to a lot. so I'm not going to sit here and be like, 'Oh, I'm shocked,' but I feel like a lot of the stats have aligned with her, I never take it for granted.

"She's my idol. I think if you told me when I was younger that I would be in these same stat lines as her, I would freak out. I don't want to get my head big or add pressure, but it is a cool moment to have that stat alongside her."

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic claimed yet another all-time record with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 victory over America's Taylor Fritz in the quarter-finals. The 36-year-old from Serbia has now surpassed the previous record holder Roger Federer by reaching a 47th grand-slam men's singles semi-final, while also becoming the oldest male player to reach the last four of the US Open since a 39-year-old Jimmy Connors in 1991.

"Obviously it's a huge opportunity every single time I step out on the court at this age and stage of my life," Djokovic said. "I don't know how many more opportunities I will get so I am trying to enjoy it as much as I can."

Zverev has fan ejected for using 'famous Hitler phrase'

A fan was ejected from the US Open after the German player Alexander Zverev complained the man used "the most famous Hitler phrase there is in this world".

Zverev, the No 12 seed, was serving at 2-2 in the fourth set of his match against the No 6 seed Jannik Sinner when he suddenly went to the chair umpire, James Keothavong, and pointed toward the fan, who was sitting in a courtside section behind the umpire.

"He just said the most famous Hitler phrase there is in this world," Zverev told Keothavong. "It's not acceptable."

Keothavong asked the fan to identify himself, then asked fans to be respectful to the players. Then, during the changeover shortly after Zverev held serve, the fan was identified by spectators seated near him and removed by security.

Zverev said after the 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 win that he has had fans make derogatory comments before, but not involving Hitler. "He started singing the anthem of Hitler that was back in the day. It was *Deutschland Über alles* [Germany above all] and it was a bit too much," Zverev said. "I love when fans are loud, I love when fans are emotional. But I think me being German and not really proud of that history, it's not really a great thing to do and I think him sitting in one of the front rows, I think a lot of people heard it. So if I don't react, I think it's bad from my side."

Zverev went on to drop that set, when he began to struggle with the humid conditions after Sinner had been cramping badly in the third set. But Zverev recovered to win the fifth set, wrapping up the match, which lasted four hours 41 minutes, at about 1.40am. He will play the defending champion, Carlos Alcaraz, in the quarter-finals.

Zverev said that it was not hard to move past the fan's remark. "It's his loss, to be honest, to not witness the final two sets of that match," Zverev said.

After two late-night matches at Flushing Meadows, Daniil Medvedev finally finished "early" on Monday by defeating Australia's Alex de Minaur 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals for the fourth time in five years. Next is a quarter-final against his Russian compatriot Andrey Rublev, who is godfather to Medvedev's daughter.

"We're really close friends … we have a great relationship," Medvedev said. "To have a friend like this is great but on the court we both want to win. We're not going to be friends in two days."

Doom and gloom for beaten 1-25 shot

Racing
Rob Wright Racing Editor

A small piece of racing history was made at Ripon yesterday when Doom became the shortest-priced favourite to be beaten since 1948.

Doom was one of two runners in the 4.20 Maiden Fillies' Stakes and started with odds of 1-25, which meant, had she won, that her backers would only get £1 for every £25 staked. But despite being trained by leading handler William Haggas and ridden by top jockey Tom Marquand, and being heavily backed in the run-up when shortening from 1-12 to 1-25, Doom was beaten by a length by Karmology, who was making her debut



Doom, ridden by Tom Marquand, stuns racing when beaten at Ripon yesterday

and went off at 9-1. The reason Doom was so strongly fancied was because she had been beaten by just a head by subsequent Oaks winner Soul Sister at Doncaster last October. And her backers had no reason to worry as she was allowed to set her own tempo in front and approaching the final two furlongs looked to have things under control.

But then Karmology, a daughter of Derby winner Golden Horn, picked up smartly when given a tap with the whip and quickened past Doom for a shock win. The Betfair betting exchange saw turnover of £451,000 on the race, with £407,000 of that on the 1-25 favourite, who traded at the minimum odds of 1-100 during the race. Karmology was matched at 109-1 in-running.

Doom equalled the defeat of Royal Forest, sent off at 1-25 when beaten into second at Ascot in September 1948.

Kinahan 'could be extradited'

Boxing
Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent

The alleged crime boss who emerged as one of the most influential figures in boxing could soon be facing trial, with talks set to take place between the authorities from Ireland and Dubai about his possible extradition from the United Arab Emirates.

Daniel Kinahan, who last year was named by the authorities in Dublin and the United States as the head of the Kinahan organised crime cartel, was a co-founder of the now disbanded MTK Global management agency and was a key player in the staging of some of the biggest bouts in the sport. In 2020, Tyson Fury thanked Kinahan directly, in a social media post, for brokering a deal for him to fight Anthony Joshua, although that fight has not taken place.

The US government's sanctions have since extended to the Americans putting a $5 million (about £3.98 million) bounty on Kinahan's head, as well as his father, Christy Kinahan Sr, and brother, Christy Jr. Officials in the UAE have frozen his assets in Dubai.

Now it has been reported in Ireland that the Garda commissioner, Drew Harris, will meet with police in Dubai to discuss bringing the Kinahan cartel leadership back to the country, with the end goal of a public prosecution.

Bath

Rob Wright

1.10 Giddy Aunt
1.40 North View
2.15 Regal Envoy (nb)
2.50 Moulin Booj
3.25 Denis Anthony
4.00 Warren Hill
4.34 Footsy
5.09 Irezumi

Going: good to firm, good in places
Draw: no advantage — **Sky Sports Racing**

1.10 Handicap (£3,245: 6f) (11 runners)

1 (7) 3-000 **RUBY COTTAGE** 18 (CD) M Saunders 5-9-11 **W Carson**
2 (9) 00300 **BRIAN THE SNAIL** 18 (P,D) P Morris 9-9-8 **T P Queally**
3 (6) 00243 **FIRST COMPANY** 20 M Loughnane 5-9-8 **B Loughnane**
4 (11) 56513 **PHOENIX GLOW** 16 (D) Jack Channon 3-9-6 **G Bass (3)**
5 (4) 01100 **MORE THAN LIKELY** 42 (P,CD) Mrs N Evans 7-9-4 **S Osborne**
6 (3) 43245 **ATTY'S EDGE** 13 (C,D) C Mason 7-9-4 **Gina Mangan (3)**
7 (1) 35523 **GHERKIN** 18 (B,D) W Kittow 6-9-4 **R Hornby**
8 (2) 06005 **FLAGMAN** 13 (D) D Faulkner 5-9-2 **Laura Coughlan (5)**
9 (10) 62061 **FAIR AND SQUARE** 6 (B,CD) R Harris 4-9-1(5ex) **L Keniry**
10 (8) 66042 **GIDDY AUNT** 18 J Portman 3-9-0 **R Havlin**
11 (5) 0606 **FISHERMANS COTTAGE** 18 (H) M Saunders 4-8-9 **C Bennett**

7-2 Gherkin, 4-1 Fair And Square, 5-1 Giddy Aunt, 11-2 Atty's Edge, 15-2 First Company, 8-1 Phoenix Glow, 10-1 More Than Likely, 16-1 Flagman.

Rob Wright's choice: Giddy Aunt improved when a neck second here **Dangers:** Ruby Cottage, Fair And Square

1.40 Maiden Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,564: 6f) (10)

1 (7) **MAISON DE BELLA** W Kittow 9-7 **L Keniry**
2 (3) **MISTER MOJITO** T Kent 9-7 **C Planas (3)**
3 (4) 32 **NORTH VIEW** 19 (BF) P Chapple-Hyam 9-7 **R Havlin**
4 (1) 4 **PROFIT STREET** 21 N Tinkler 9-7 **R Scott**
5 (2) **TENNIS COURT** J Osborne 9-7 **S Osborne**
6 (6) 3336 **ACER** 20 C Cox 9-2 **J Fahy**
7 (10) 4243 **ANGEL SHARED** 35 Steph Hollinshead 9-2 **D Costello**
8 (9) 0 **EVASION** 107 J Portman 9-2 **R Hornby**
9 (8) 00 **EYES CLOSED** 18 G Boughey 9-2 **B Loughnane (3)**
10 (5) **LILY'S SECRET** T Vaughan 9-2 **W Cox**

Evens North View, 4-1 Acer, 5-1 Angel Shared, 14-1 Tennis Court, Evasion, Profit Street, 16-1 Eyes Closed, 25-1 Maison De Bella.

Wright choice: North View failed to last home over seven furlongs at Newmarket **Dangers:** Angel Shared, Tennis Court

2.15 Handicap (£3,873: 5f) (10)

1 (3) 16303 **CONNIE'S ROSE** 5 (CD) G Harris 4-9-9 **C Planas (3)**
2 (4) 42060 **REGAL ENVOY** 4 (V,C,D) W Knight 4-9-9 **J Mitchell**
3 (7) 02112 **FORESEEABLE FUTURE** 11 (V,D) R Carr 8-9-9 **T Fisher (3)**
4 (8) 36220 **SYMBOL OF HOPE** 18 (P,CD) G Harris 5-9-8 **B Loughnane**
5 (2) -0256 **CABEZA DE LLAVE** 16 (D) M Attwater 4-9-7 **R Havlin**
6 (9) -0551 **PEPSI CAT** 14 (T,CD) Steph Hollinshead 4-9-4 **D Costello**
7 (10) 63115 **SHESADABBER** 17 (CD) P Evans 7-9-3 **T P Queally**
8 (5) -0605 **GLAMOROUS EXPRESS** 30 (T,CD) A Carroll 4-9-2 **W Carson**
9 (1) 53605 **WILEY POST** 12 (B,D) A Carroll 10-9-0 **S Osborne**
10 (6) 20566 **REVERSION** 6 (T,V,D) C Wallis 4-8-4 **R Da Silva**

3-1 Foreseeable Future, 7-2 Pepsi Cat, 11-2 Connie's Rose, Shesadabber, 8-1 Symbol of Hope, 10-1 Regal Envoy, 12-1 Cabeza De Llave, 16-1 Wiley Post.

Wright choice: Regal Envoy was hampered at Beverley; goes well here **Dangers:** Connie's Rose, Symbol Of Hope

2.50 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,873: 5f) (9)

1 (7) 3100- **ANGE DE L'AMOUR** 340 R Brisland 9-11 **S Osborne**
2 (2) 14145 **JAX EDGE** 39 (C,D) C Mason 9-10 **Gina Mangan (3)**
3 (1) 53124 **MOULIN BOOJ** 26 (BF,D) G Scott 9-8 **R Hornby**
4 (4) 20166 **BEAU ROC** 33 (P,T,CD) G Boughey 9-7 **B Loughnane (3)**
5 (8) 00040 **CORINTHIAN KID** 83 P Morris 9-6 **L Keniry**
6 (3) 40024 **CONFEDERATION** 14 (T,D) Dylan Cunha 9-6 **C Planas (3)**
7 (6) 0346 **MOONLIGHT DREAMER** 22 R Cowell 9-4 **R Havlin**
8 (9) 03534 **KATAR** 16 (T) Mrs R Ford 9-0 **T Fisher (3)**
9 (5) 0-540 **GLAMOROUS STAR** 49 A Carroll 8-4 **Mollie Phillips (3)**

7-4 Moulin Booj, 9-2 Jax Edge, Confederation, 11-2 Katar, 10-1 Beau Roc, 14-1 Moonlight Dreamer, 16-1 Ange De L'Amour, Corinthian Kid, 25-1 Glamorous Star.

Wright choice: Moulin Booj drops in trip after fading late on over six furlongs at Thirsk **Dangers:** Jax Edge, Katar

3.25 Handicap (£3,873: 1m 6f) (8)

1 (2) 03210 **AL AZHAR** 27 (B,BF,D) M Tregoning 4-10-4 **A Keeley (3)**
2 (4) 054-4 **HIGHLAND FROLIC** 5 (B,T) M Harris 4-10-4 **R Hornby**
3 (5) 03/0- **GENUFLEX** J326 (P,T) M Harris 5-10-1 **R Havlin**
4 (7) 11643 **MY CHIQUITA** 14 (H) B Brookhouse 4-9-13 **D Costello**
5 (6) 06-24 **SPRITZIN'** 48 (BF) Sir M Prescott 3-9-8 **D Keenan**
6 (1) 22132 **DENIS ANTHONY** 25 (BF) J Fanshawe 3-9-7 **R Scott**
7 (3) 22321 **DREAMS ADOZEN** 23 (V) C Johnston 3-9-5 **J Fanning**
8 (8) 40-34 **LOGISTICAL** J34 (P,T) T Lacey 3-9-4 **B Loughnane (3)**

9-4 Denis Anthony, 7-2 Spritzin', 4-1 Al Azhar, 9-2 Dreams Adozen, 15-2 My Chiquita, 10-1 Highland Frolic, 25-1 Logistical, 66-1 Genuflex.

Wright choice: Denis Anthony is progressive and this stiffer test will suit **Dangers:** Dreams Adozen, Logistical

4.00 Handicap (£8,505: 1m 4f) (9)

1 (2) 00-04 **REEL ROSIE** 109 H Palmer 4-10-3 **C Planas (3)**
2 (1) -0040 **TAMILLA** 40 (D) W Haggas 4-10-2 **Greg Cheyne**
3 (9) 10022 **MAYFAIR GOLD** 22 (H,BF) A King 4-9-11 **R Hornby**
4 (6) 12300 **DIVINA GRACE** 18 R Guest 3-9-8 **D Keenan**
5 (3) 602 **AVON LIGHT** 19 W Muir & C Grassick 3-9-5 **R Havlin**
6 (5) 51233 **FLASH BARDOT** 20 (D) Jack Channon 3-9-4 **Rose Dawes**
7 (7) -3321 **WARREN HILL** 27 R Varian 3-9-3 **J Mitchell**
8 (4) 62645 **AE FOND KISS** 19 E De Giles 4-8-11 **A Keeley (3)**
9 (8) 14314 **DOVENA** 55 (D) Mrs S Gardner 3-8-4 **S Osborne**

2-1 Warren Hill, 7-2 Flash Bardot, 11-2 Divina Grace, 8-1 Avon Light, Mayfair Gold, 10-1 Tamilla, 14-1 Reel Rosie, 20-1 Ae Fond Kiss, Dovena.

Wright choice: Warren Hill won well at Nottingham; she should stay this longer trip **Dangers:** Divina Grace, Dovena

4.34 Handicap (Div I: £3,245: 1m 4f) (10)

1 (4) 00-30 **FOOTSY** 147 (P) R Stephens 4-9-11 **D Keenan**
2 (1) 12020 **MISS SLIGO** 16 (B,T,D) J Osborne 6-9-9 **S Osborne**
3 (7) 05065 **BROAD APPEAL** 24 (D) J Portman 9-9-7 **R Hornby**
4 (6) 42215 **SEND IN THE CLOUDS** 3 (D) A Carroll 6-9-6 **Mollie Phillips (3)**
5 (8) -5300 **PRINCESS T** 6 (T,V,D) N Mulholland 8-9-6 **L Keniry**
6 (9) 36530 **SUSANBEQUICK** 33 (P) Joe Ponting 4-9-3 **W Cox**
7 (5) 23523 **BILLAKI MOU** 22 (V) G Baker 3-9-1 **T Fisher (3)**
8 (10) 005 **TRUSSST IN ME** 32 G L Moore 3-9-1 **T P Queally**
9 (2) 00000 **FINN STAR** 2 (T) S Kirk 3-8-9 **C Planas (3)**
10 (3) 06502 **TWO PLUS TWO** 18 (B) E De Giles 3-8-9 **A Keeley (3)**

3-1 Billaki Mou, 9-2 Princess T, 6-1 Send In The Clouds, 7-1 Broad Appeal, Miss Sligo, 8-1 Two Plus Two, 10-1 Trussst In Me, Susanbequick.

Wright choice: Footsy could be sharpened up by the fitting of cheekpieces **Dangers:** Billaki Mou, Susanbequick

5.09 Handicap (Div II: £3,245: 1m 4f) (9)

1 (5) /450- **BAILEYS WARRIOR** 303 (H) D Faulkner 5-9-9 **Laura Coughlan (5)**
2 (9) 41640 **UTHER PENDRAGON** 6 (P,CD) J S Moore 8-9-7 **T Fisher (3)**
3 (8) -6531 **ASENSE** 22 (P) G L Moore 4-9-7 **T P Queally**
4 (6) 0-304 **KINDGIRL** 18 (P,T) A Ralph 5-9-6 **D Costello**
5 (1) -5600 **PYRRHIC DANCER** 21 (T) G Brown 4-9-3 **Gina Mangan**
6 (4) 00-06 **MANY WORDS** 16 A Carroll 5-9-3 **W Carson**
7 (7) 40550 **IREZUMI** 23 (B) J Boyle 3-9-1 **C Bennett**
8 (2) 56530 **HIGHLAND FLYER** 49 J Portman 3-9-0 **B Loughnane (3)**
9 (3) 53650 **QUEEN OF STEEL** 27 M Usher 3-8-9 **Rose Dawes (5)**

11-10 Asense, 4-1 Kindgirl, 7-1 Highland Flyer, 15-2 Queen Of Steel, 10-1 Uther Pendragon, 16-1 Many Words, 20-1 Baileys Warrior, Irezumi, 33-1 Pyrrhic Dancer.

Wright choice: Irezumi is fitted with blinkers for the first time; can take a weak contest **Dangers:** Asense, Kindgirl

Kempton Park

Rob Wright

6.00 States
6.30 Poutchek
7.00 Dunes King
7.30 Fitz Perfectly
8.00 Miss Dolly Rocker
8.30 Spinaround
9.00 Stella Hogan

Going: standard to slow
Draw: 5f-1m, low numbers best — **Racing TV**

6.00 Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,140: 6f) (9)

1 (2) 604 **BLACK JACK DAVEY** 42 R Cook & J Bridger 9-11 **R Clutterbuck**
2 (1) 36004 **STATES** 20 (B) R Hughes 9-11 **W Buick**
3 (3) 25232 **BIG BROWN BEAR** 3 (P) E J-Houghton 9-11 **Georgia Dobie (3)**
4 (9) 03322 **CHARLIE MASON** 9 (V,BF) P Evans 9-11 **O Murphy**
5 (7) 3305 **BELLE STORM** 26 J Tate 9-10 **C Lee**
6 (8) 400 **ANGLESEY LAD** 23 D Loughnane 9-9 **David Egan**
7 (4) 00013 **PINPOINT** 23 (BF) R Hannon 9-8 **T Greatrex**
8 (5) 30500 **JUNGLE DANCE** 28 J Butler 9-7 **Jason Watson**
9 (6) 00046 **DAMIA** 20 (H) P Chapple-Hyam 9-3 **K Stott**

5-2 Charlie Mason, 11-4 Pinpoint, 4-1 Big Brown Bear, 10-1 Belle Storm, States, 12-1 Damia, Black Jack Davey, Anglesey Lad, 33-1 Jungle Dance.

6.30 Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,672: 1m) (8)

1 (7) 00 **AUTUMN DREAM** 21 C Hills 9-2 **J Crowley**
2 (1) 0 **DORS DELIGHT** 14 D Ivory 9-2 **J Smith**
3 (5) **GLIMPSE THE MOON** K P De Foy 9-2 **B Sayette**
4 (3) 0 **LADY CHATTERLEY** 25 M Botti 9-2 **P J McDonald**
5 (4) 32 **POUTCHEK** 21 (BF) R Varian 9-2 **David Egan**
6 (2) 56 **RAKNAH** 95 A Balding 9-2 **O Murphy**
7 (6) **WHERE I WANNA BE** R Beckett 9-2 **Laura Pearson**
8 (8) **YOU GOT TO ME** R Beckett 9-2 **H Crouch**

4-5 Poutchek, 11-2 You Got To Me, 6-1 Raknah, 8-1 Glimpse The Moon, 10-1 Where I Wanna Be, 16-1 Autumn Dream, 25-1 Lady Chatterley, 50-1 Dors Delight.

7.00 Stakes (£3,780: 1m) (12)

1 (2) 15 **DUNES KING** 27 (BF) H & R Charlton 3-9-11 **O Murphy**
2 (9) 31 **NO SURRENDER** 48 E Dunlop 3-9-11 **W Buick**
3 (1) 0 **MANNY BOY** 13 C Dunnett 4-9-9 **Shariq Mohd (7)**
4 (6) 0 **AKKADIAN THUNDER** 91 R Varian 3-9-4 **David Egan**
5 (11) 3 **BOLDLY** 127 G Boughey 3-9-4 **K Stott**
6 (3) 60 **FOR REAL** 7 M Murphy & M Keady 3-9-4 **Georgia Dobie**
7 (5) 2-0 **GREATEST TIME** 137 R Hannon 3-9-4 **S Hitchcott**
8 (7) 5 **NIGHT BREEZE** 12 I Williams 3-9-4 **C Lee**
9 (10) 0 **NOSTROMO** 37 R Teal 3-9-4 **Jason Watson**
10 (12) 566 **NUKETOWN** 13 R J Smith 3-9-4 **T Greatrex**
11 (4) -4226 **BLOOMWITHGRACE** 8 T Dascombe 3-8-13 **A Rawlinson**
12 (8) 4 **MOUNTAIN FLOWER** 18 C Hills 3-8-13 **J Crowley**

9-4 Dunes King, 100-30 No Surrender, 9-2 Greatest Time, 5-1 Bloomwithgrace, 8-1 Boldly, 12-1 Mountain Flower, 14-1 Akkadian Thunder, 25-1 Night Breeze.

7.30 Handicap (£4,187: 1m) (13)

1 (1) 00640 **WADACRE GRACE** 44 (D) C Johnston 4-10-0 **F Norton**
2 (4) 33346 **LORDSBRIDGE GIRL** 19 (CD) W Knight 4-9-12 **B Wilkie**
3 (5) -6362 **SAIL ON SILVERBIRD** 23 M Bell 3-9-11 **H Crouch**
4 (9) 0-301 **VINAKA** 34 A Stronge 3-9-10 **J Crowley**
5 (6) 4-315 **LADY WORMSLEY** 18 (P,D) J Fanshawe 3-9-10 **O Murphy**
6 (8) 32-31 **EVENING STORY** 17 (D) D & C Kubler 3-9-10 **J Doyle**
7 (11) 2310 **ROSE BOLT** 23 (T,D) W Haggas 3-9-7 **B Sayette**
8 (10) 42050 **TAMALUK** 17 (B) A Watson 3-9-7 **J Bryan**
9 (3) 5-054 **SEA OF ELEGANCE** 47 T Ward 3-9-5 **P J McDonald**
10 (12) 66-5 **SAM'S HOPE** 242 R Hannon 3-9-5 **S Hitchcott**
11 (2) 4D064 **FITZ PERFECTLY** 23 (P) C Fellowes 3-9-4 **K Stott**
12 (7) -3335 **ZAAKARA** 27 Sir M Stoute 3-9-0 **W Buick**
13 (13) 00033 **FAST FLO** 13 (P) C Dunnett 4-8-9 **Shariq Mohd (7)**

4-1 Sail On Silverbird, 5-1 Zaakara, Lady Wormsley, 13-2 Evening Story, 8-1 Sea Of Elegance, 10-1 Lordsbridge Girl, 14-1 Fitz Perfectly, Wadacre Grace, Vinaka.

8.00 Handicap (3-Y-O: £6,281: 1m 3f) (7)

1 (3) 06111 **FINEST LEADER** 26 H & R Charlton 9-11 **W Buick**
2 (4) -4620 **LION KINGDOM** 18 (P,T) J Fanshawe 9-11 **O Murphy**
3 (5) 6531 **UNLIMITED** 8 W Haggas 9-5(6ex) **James Doyle**
4 (6) 522 **PALIO** 49 A King 9-4 **J Crowley**
5 (1) 2-212 **MISS DOLLY ROCKER** 27 R Teal 9-2 **Jason Watson**
6 (2) 355 **CHARLIE'S CHOICE** 135 D M Simcock 8-11 **Georgia Dobie**
7 (7) -6050 **SEA URCHIN** 83 (W) I Williams 8-9 **David Egan**

6-4 Finest Leader, 15-8 Unlimited, 4-1 Lion Kingdom, 10-1 Miss Dolly Rocker, 20-1 Palio, 25-1 Charlie's Choice, 33-1 Sea Urchin.

8.30 Handicap (£6,281: 7f) (8)

1 (7) 55040 **APHELIOS** 18 (P,C) M Appleby 4-9-10 **W Buick**
2 (6) 04304 **MITROSONFIRE** 18 (C,D) W Muir & C Grassick 5-9-9 **P J McDonald**
3 (1) 51001 **ZERO CARBON** 21 (CD) R Hughes 4-9-8 **F Marsh**
4 (3) 03332 **SOAR ABOVE** 46 (CD) J Butler 8-9-8 **James Doyle**
5 (8) -4032 **MAXI BOY** 13 (P) M Bell 6-9-8 **K Stott**
6 (4) 25500 **SPINAROUND** 14 (B,D) K P De Foy 4-9-6 **B Sayette**
7 (2) 10406 **SAYIFYOUWILL** 12 (P,CD) A Perrett 5-9-4 **J Crowley**
8 (5) 11353 **FLYING SECRET** 26 (D) E J-Houghton 4-9-2 **C Bishop**

11-4 Zero Carbon, 4-1 Mitrosonfire, 5-1 Maxi Boy, Aphelios, 11-2 Flying Secret, 8-1 Soar Above, 16-1 Sayifyouwill, 20-1 Spinaround.

9.00 Handicap (3-Y-O: £4,187: 7f) (11)

1 (9) 20035 **CONCERT BOY** 25 (P,D) D O'Meara 9-10 **Jason Watson**
2 (5) 52552 **SURREY NOIR** 14 (P,BF) C Fellowes 9-9 **James Doyle**
3 (4) 3-240 **FROM BEYOND** 18 (P) H & R Charlton 9-9 **W Buick**
4 (1) 52410 **ARBAAWI** 21 (D) S C Williams 9-8 **J Crowley**
5 (11) 15040 **JURYMAN** 39 (D) W Jarvis 9-7 **B Sayette**
6 (10) 43230 **HARRIET'S ANGEL** 79 (W,T) E Dunlop 9-7 **K Stott**
7 (7) 46045 **ENOLA GREY** 42 J Portman 9-6 **R Clutterbuck**
8 (8) -5061 **BELIEVE YOU ME** 40 (D) H Main 9-5 **H Crouch**
9 (3) 12300 **UNLIMITED DATA** 19 W Muir & C Grassick 9-4 **P J McDonald**
10 (6) 30420 **CAPTAIN WENTWORTH** 59 (BF) J Butler 9-2 **David Egan**
11 (2) 0556 **STELLA HOGAN** 21 J G O'Shea 8-10 **Georgia Dobie (3)**

7-4 Believe You Me, 100-30 Surrey Noir, 11-2 Captain Wentworth, 10-1 Juryman, 12-1 Unlimited Data, 14-1 Arbaawi, Harriet's Angel, 16-1 Concert Boy.

Lingfield Park

Rob Wright

1.55 Doves Of Peace
2.30 Desert Master
3.05 Love Billy Boy
3.40 Bodygroove (nap)
4.15 Karat Karat
4.50 Belo Horizante
5.25 Villalobos

Going: standard
Draw: 5f-1m, low best — **Sky Sports Racing**

1.55 Handicap (£3,245: 7f) (14)

1 (7) 03145 **BOARHUNT** 19 (P,BF,D) M Appleby 4-9-9 **J Leavy (7)**
2 (11) 32360 **BEAR TO DREAM** 13 (D) M Attwater 4-9-7 **Millie Wonnacott (5)**
3 (2) 02424 **NO TURNING BACK** 27 (BF) P Phelan 4-9-7 **P Bradley**
4 (1) 00025 **DOVES OF PEACE** 14 M Bell 3-9-7 **J Bradnam (7)**
5 (9) 54630 **Q TWENTY BOY** 19 M Usher 8-9-6 **Miss Alicia Perkins (7)**
6 (14) 51066 **CARRY ON AITCH** 22 R Ingram 3-9-6 **Rhiain Ingram**
7 (10) 0-606 **DON'T FIGHT IT** 42 S Woodman 3-9-6 **O Lewis (5)**
8 (13) 23300 **ZOUS BABY** 18 E De Giles 3-9-5 **A Farragher**
9 (3) 60040 **SIR SEDRIC** 7 (V,D) L Carter 5-9-4 **P-L Jamin**
10 (12) 500-0 **ROMANTIC MEMORIES** 42 J Portman 4-9-4 **Olivia Tubb**
11 (6) 064-0 **HE CAN DANCE** 23 G Brown 5-9-3 **Anna Gibson (7)**
12 (5) 00-00 **HOLD THE PRESS** 111 J R Jenkins 4-9-3 **Liam Wright (5)**
13 (8) -6000 **UNO GRANDE** 14 (B) Sir M Todd 3-9-0 **M Tabti (5)**
14 (4) -0500 **DREAM FRONTIER** 16 (P) C Poulton 3-8-13 **Elle-May Croot**

7-2 No Turning Back, 4-1 Boarhunt, 11-2 Bear To Dream, 13-2 others.

2.30 Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,873: 5f) (5)

1 (1) 4016 **COTAI VISION** 17 E Walker 9-10 **T Marquand**
2 (4) 352 **LEAVES OF GRASS** 22 A Balding 9-6 **D Probert**
3 (5) 02365 **DESERT MASTER** 29 J Tate 9-2 **Rossa Ryan**
4 (2) 54565 **TORVAR** 9 (H) D O'Meara 9-0 **R Kingscote**
5 (3) 0060 **ZOLA POWER** 41 R Hughes 8-11 **G Rooke**

5-2 Leaves Of Grass, 11-4 Cotai Vision, 100-30 Desert Master, 4-1 others.

3.05 Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,564: 5f) (10)

1 (2) 103 **LOVE BILLY BOY** 13 (D) R Hannon 9-11 **S M Levey**
2 (6) 21 **TAN RAPIDO** 39 (D) C Fellowes 9-11 **C Shepherd**
3 (5) 1 **MASTER OF MY FATE** 17 (D) J J Quinn 9-8 **J Hart**
4 (10) 6 **OUR BANK** 49 A Watson 9-4 **L Morris**
5 (4) 04 **MEGANISSI** 8 R Hughes 8-13 **G Rooke**
6 (8) 65 **NATURALIA** 42 R Guest 8-13 **D Probert**
7 (3) **PERSIAN BLUE** W Haggas 8-13 **T Marquand**
8 (7) 24 **RAINYNITEINGEORGIA** 75 (BF) W Jarvis 8-13 **J P Spencer**
9 (9) 5 **TOMSHALFSISTER** 56 R Cowell 8-13 **M Ghiani**
10 (1) 0 **UNAVAILABLE** 56 C Banham 8-13 **J Haynes**

5-2 Master Of My Fate, 3-1 Love Billy Boy, 4-1 Rainyniteingeorgia, 13-2 others.

3.40 Handicap (£3,873: 2m) (8)

1 (2) 46210 **ARCADIAN FRIEND** 23 (P,C) Sir M Prescott 4-10-4 **L Morris**
2 (7) 40143 **MUKHA MAGIC** 36 (B,T,CD) G Kelleway 7-10-4 **T Marquand**
3 (8) 5/320 **RENARDEAU** 18 (C) A Stronge 7-10-4 **R Kingscote**
4 (3) 00-06 **PHOENIX AQUILUS** J118 (P,D) S Durack 6-10-1 **D Probert**
5 (5) 4221 **ART DE VIVRE** 5 (D) C Fellowes 3-9-12(6ex) **J P Spencer**
6 (4) 04000 **ARABESCATO** 23 (B,CD) Martin Dunne 6-9-5 **C Shepherd**
7 (6) -0221 **SOLUTION** 23 (D) R Beckett 3-9-3 **Rossa Ryan**
8 (1) 0-515 **BODYGROOVE** 23 (H) R Spencer 3-9-0 **N Callan**

11-10 Art De Vivre, 11-4 Solution, 8-1 others.

4.15 Stakes (£4,104: 1m 4f) (6)

1 (1) 41 **KARAT KARAT** 27 W Haggas 3-9-7 **T Marquand**
2 (6) 32442 **ANOTHER RUN** 25 A Balding 3-9-5 **D Probert**
3 (4) 3-4 **HUMANITY** 25 (B,T,BF) J & T Gosden 3-9-5 **C Fallon**
4 (3) 6 **KING OF THE PRIDE** 25 J Ferguson 3-9-5 **J P Spencer**
5 (5) 0-3 **CORYMBOSA** 146 Sir M Stoute 3-9-0 **R Kingscote**
6 (2) **ON CLOUD** D M Simcock 3-9-0 **L Morris**

7-4 Karat Karat, 9-4 Humanity, 9-2 Another Run, 6-1 Corymbosa, 12-1 others.

4.50 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,245: 1m) (10)

1 (1) 63111 **BELO HORIZONTE** 7 (P,CD) R Spencer 10-0(6ex) **N Callan**
2 (6) 46002 **AL TARFA** 7 W Knight 9-11 **M Ghiani**
3 (2) 64402 **SPREZZATURA** 12 (P) M Appleby 9-10 **C Fallon**
4 (5) 500 **CABARET SHOW** 21 (P,T) T Ward 9-8 **S M Levey**
5 (8) -0160 **LARRSEN** 39 (P,D) G L Moore 9-6 **D Probert**
6 (9) 45301 **ANGEL OF ANTRIM** 14 (P,D) A Stronge 9-5 **L Morris**
7 (10) 0-440 **GINTINI** 19 (P) Mrs L Mongan 8-9 **G Rooke**
8 (4) 00005 **KING ELVIS** 28 A Carroll 8-9 **Josephine Gordon**
9 (3) 60460 **GREY ROSETTA** 16 L Dace 8-9 **J Haynes**
10 (7) 50000 **ARLECCHINO'S STAR** 23 (P) M Usher 8-9 **A Farragher (3)**

10-11 Belo Horizonte, 5-1 Al Tarfa, Angel Of Antrim, 8-1 Larrsen, 10-1 others.

5.25 Handicap (£3,245: 1m) (10)

1 (8) 63341 **HANDEL** 56 (P,D) C Banham 5-9-11 **J Haynes**
2 (3) 65515 **LUNA QUEEN** 10 (CD) C Allen 4-9-11 **S M Levey**
3 (10) 03065 **KING OF THE DANCE** 21 (P) E J-Houghton 4-9-11 **T Marquand**
4 (2) 5-530 **BHUBEZI** 56 (V) P Chamings 5-9-10 **D Probert**
5 (9) 53550 **ALYARA** 14 (P,D) J Flint 5-9-6 **C Shepherd**
6 (4) 43245 **VILLALOBOS** 39 (P,CD) S Hodgson 4-9-4 **A Farragher (3)**
7 (5) 100-P **FLORENCE STREET** 20 (H,V,CD) Mrs L Richards 5-9-4 **G Rooke**
8 (7) 10015 **STAR OF EPSOM** 67 (BF,C) P Phelan 5-9-2 **P Bradley (3)**
9 (1) 0635- **VILLEURBANNE** 393 L Carter 5-9-2 **Josephine Gordon**
10 (6) 30000 **RAINBOW SIGN** 23 (T,C) M Pattinson 5-8-9 **L Morris**

7-2 Star Of Epsom, 4-1 Handel, Villalobos, 11-2 Luna Queen, 7-1 others.

Southwell

Rob Wright

1.30 Churchill Rose
2.05 Southwold
2.40 Queen Of Atlantis
3.15 Gressington
3.50 Create
4.25 Hezahunk
5.00 Zivaniya
5.30 Higher Law

Going: standard
Draw: no advantage — **Sky Sports Racing**

1.30 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,245: 1m 3f) (14)

1 (8) 64033 **MIDSUMMER DANCE** 27 Harry Eustace 9-11 **G Wood**
2 (6) 00052 **RAMPANT** 22 Ewan Whillans 9-10 **P Dennis**
3 (12) -6622 **BLETCHLEY STORM** 128 M Bell 9-10 **Dylan Hogan**
4 (2) 62053 **FOUGERE** 34 (BF) D Ivory 9-10 **Jimmy Quinn**
5 (10) 3006 **ANNA AURELIA** 23 J Portman 9-8 **T Whelan**
6 (3) 05232 **ANGEL OF PEACE** 22 (P) E Walker 9-8 **R Coakley**
7 (14) 16202 **THE PUG** 23 (P) S Kirk 9-8 **B Curtis**
8 (4) 0050 **DALATARA** 48 (T) D & C Kubler 9-8 **T Eaves**
9 (1) 45031 **CHURCHILL ROSE** 27 (P,D) C Fellowes 9-7 **K Shoemark**
10 (9) 545 **LADY OF NEPAL** 37 A Carroll 9-7 **C Hardie**
11 (7) 02035 **CHURCHELLA** 23 (V) D O'Meara 9-3 **D Tudhope**
12 (13) 64560 **RAINCLOUD** 17 M Chapman 8-12 **Morgan Cole (5)**
13 (5) 500- **NORTHERN ROSE** J47 G Hanmer 8-12 **C Beasley**
14 (11) 0-00 **LADY SAXON** 22 (P) R Fell & S Murray 8-11 **J Peate (3)**

4-1 Bletchley Storm, 9-2 Fougere, Churchill Rose, 6-1 others.

2.05 Handicap (£3,873: 1m) (14)

1 (14) 51141 **CALIN'S LAD** 114 (D) A Carroll 8-9-9 **B Curtis**
2 (1) 14152 **CLIPSHAM GOLD** 69 (D) Dylan Cunha 4-9-9 **Kyle Strydom**
3 (9) /00P0 **RISE HALL** 39 (V,D) G Oldroyd 8-9-9 **H Russell**
4 (11) 00422 **HE'S A GENTLEMAN** 25 (V,D) H Palmer 4-9-8 **H Davies**
5 (4) 14320 **SOUTHWOLD** 19 (B,BF,CD) D & C Kubler 4-9-8 **K Shoemark**
6 (2) 50221 **CIOTOG** 14 (D) M Loughnane 5-9-7 **D Muscutt**
7 (12) 44003 **SOAMES FORSYTE** 10 M Herrington 4-9-7 **T Eaves**
8 (5) 60-00 **MYKONOS ST JOHN** 190 (P,C,D) S Dixon 6-9-6 **Elisha Whittington (5)**
9 (7) 44011 **MOTAWAAFEQ** 28 (H,P,CD) M Appleby 7-9-6 **F Larson (3)**
10 (8) 60465 **HOTSPUR HARRY** 22 R Eddery 6-9-5 **Dylan Hogan**
11 (3) 04413 **BUSHFIRE** 38 (D) Gemma Tutty 4-9-5 **C Hutchinson (3)**
12 (10) 40000 **DANCINGINTHEWOODS** 18 (B) Miss A Murphy 6-9-5 **C Beasley**
13 (13) 06345 **LIGHT UP OUR STARS** 9 (H,D) S Dixon 7-9-4 **Dale Swift**
14 (6) 45003 **TOUCHWOOD** 8 (P) R Carr 5-9-4 **JP Sullivan**

7-2 Ciotog, 4-1 Calin's Lad, 11-2 Motawaafeq, 6-1 others.

2.40 Stakes (Div I: 2-Y-O: £3,564: 7f) (10)

1 (8) 1 **CAELAN** 23 (D) M Botti 9-7 **S Cherchi**
2 (1) 524 **AMERICAN GLORY** 18 K P De Foy 9-4 **D Tudhope**
3 (10) **AZURE STAGE** E Dunlop 9-4 **Morgan Cole (5)**
4 (4) **EAGLE ANGEL** J & T Gosden 9-4 **K Shoemark**
5 (7) 0 **FAST SOCIETY** 27 A Balding 9-4 **B Curtis**
6 (9) 00 **MIST ROLLIN IN** 7 D Carroll 9-0 **Z Wheatley (5)**
7 (5) 0 **THE CRAFTY MOLE** 9 D O'Meara 9-0 **R Oliver**
8 (3) 50 **FIGHTING WREN** 29 K R Burke 8-13 **A Breslin (3)**
9 (2) 2 **QUEEN OF ATLANTIS** 71 J Ferguson 8-13 **D Muscutt**
10 (6) **ROGUE STATE** Tom Clover 8-9 **H Turner**

9-4 Eagle Angel, 3-1 Queen Of Atlantis, 5-1 Caelan, 6-1 others.

3.15 Stakes (Div II: 2-Y-O: £3,564: 7f) (9)

1 (8) **BIG LOU** A Watson 9-7 **K Shoemark**
2 (5) **BLESSED BOY** G Boughey 9-7 **B Curtis**
3 (1) **YAAJOOZ** C Fellowes 9-7 **H Davies**
4 (9) 52 **INVINCIBLE AURA** 23 M Botti 9-5 **D Tudhope**
5 (6) 06 **DANEHILL STAR** 23 A Carroll 9-3 **T Eaves**
6 (2) **GRESSINGTON** E Bethell 9-3 **C Rodriguez**
7 (4) 00 **PROJECT FRANK** 32 Jessica Macey 9-3 **B Sanderson (3)**
8 (7) 0 **NOTHING TO FEAR** 20 Harry Eustace 9-2 **G Wood**
9 (3) **ANGEL OF GOLD** S Dixon 9-0 **P Dennis**

2-1 Invincible Aura, 3-1 Blessed Boy, 4-1 Big Lou, 6-1 Yaajooz, 7-1 others.

3.50 Stakes (£4,104: 7f) (10)

1 (8) 1 **CREATE** 208 (C) S Dixon 3-9-7 **P Dennis**
2 (3) **BRAZEN RASCAL** (W) Simon Whitaker 3-9-5 **S B Kirrane**
3 (10) **HAMLET** J J Quinn 3-9-5 **G Sanna (5)**
4 (9) **KODI HAWK** D Shaw 3-9-5 **C Hardie**
5 (2) 60 **SOLAR PORTRAIT** 7 D & C Kubler 3-9-5 **K Shoemark**
6 (5) 0 **ROMAN PRINCESS** 18 J Stimpson 4-9-2 **J Fisher (5)**
7 (1) 06 **COCO STARLIGHT** 25 J Camacho 3-9-0 **Ryan Sexton (3)**
8 (7) 43 **PEROVSKIA** 9 E Dunlop 3-9-0 **Morgan Cole (5)**
9 (4) 62 **SHEEHAN** 17 (T) J Fanshawe 3-9-0 **D Muscutt**
10 (6) 0 **TEDDY'S DAWN** 25 H Palmer 3-8-12 **H Davies**

9-4 Create, 7-2 Sheehan, 6-1 Hamlet, 8-1 Perovskia, 10-1 others.

4.25 Handicap (£3,245: 7f) (14)

1 (6) 06405 **MIN TILL** 16 (H,D) M & D Easterby 4-9-11 **B Garritty**
2 (3) 45446 **MENG TIAN** 21 (T,D) S P C Woods 4-9-10 **D Muscutt**
3 (13) 04106 **BACK FROM DUBAI** 10 (CD) K Frost 6-9-10 **B Sanderson (3)**
4 (14) -0452 **HEZAHUNK** 22 M Appleby 4-9-9 **B Curtis**
5 (8) -6001 **HOMER STOKES** 9 (CD) D & N Barron 5-9-9 **Mia Nicholls**
6 (5) 35604 **WIZARDING** 18 (D) H Main 4-9-9 **G Wood**
7 (4) 01366 **MUDDY LYNN** 22 (P) S Spencer 4-9-7 **Dale Swift**
8 (12) 45011 **THOMAS EQUINAS** 22 (P,D) D Ivory 4-9-7 **H Davies**
9 (9) 64255 **KODEBREAKER** 20 (CD) M Herrington 4-9-7 **T Eaves**
10 (2) 00024 **CRYSTAL DAWN** 57 (T,D) Ronald Thompson 7-9-5 **K Strydom**
11 (7) 36532 **ASMUND** 16 (B,BF,D) D Carroll 6-9-4 **Z Wheatley (5)**
12 (10) 00553 **GYPSY WHISPER** 27 (B,D) S Dixon 6-9-2 **Elisha Whittington**
13 (1) 52200 **VARIETY ISLAND** 16 (P) Simon Whitaker 4-9-0 **P Dennis**
14 (11) /0-05 **MY SAND BOY** 29 A Carroll 4-8-9 **C Hardie**

5-2 Thomas Equinas, 5-1 Asmund, 6-1 Hezahunk, 8-1 others.

5.00 Handicap (£3,245: 2m 102yd) (10)

1 (9) 21030 **SOCIAL CITY** 27 (P,C,D) A Carroll 7-10-2 **T Eaves**
2 (1) 1305- **OUR SCHOLAR** J43 Jack Jones 4-10-2 **Dylan Hogan**
3 (3) /4355 **SCOTCH MIST** 35 J Feilden 4-10-0 **F Larson (3)**
4 (2) 440-5 **LONDON EYE** 69 (B,D) J Butler 7-10-0 **H Burns (3)**
5 (4) 30444 **WANNABE BRAVE** 34 (V,D) J Fanshawe 4-9-13 **D Muscutt**
6 (8) 50-04 **DOUBLETHETROUBLE** 9 (P) J Butler 5-9-13 **C Beasley**
7 (6) -5626 **ZIVANIYA** 31 (P) H Palmer 3-9-6 **H Davies**
8 (10) 56064 **KITTEN'S DREAM** 7 (B,CD) S Dixon 6-9-4 **Elisha Whittington**
9 (7) 0000/ **SEHAYLI** J18 L Morgan 10-9-3 **S W Kelly**
10 (5) 660 **TRINIDAD CALYPSO** 16 J Feilden 3-8-2 **Jimmy Quinn**

13-8 Our Scholar, 3-1 Zivaniya, 8-1 Scotch Mist, Doublethetrouble, 10-1 others.

5.30 Handicap (£3,873: 6f) (14)

1 (7) 63356 **BEAUTY CHOICE** 27 (V,D) M & D Easterby 6-9-13 **Joanna Mason**
2 (1) 60-03 **JILL ROSE** 40 (D) Simon Whitaker 7-9-12 **P Dennis**
3 (9) 1-530 **EL TESORO** 99 (P,BF,D) Joseph Parr 3-9-12 **D Muscutt**
4 (4) 22330 **RAY VONN** 6 (H,T) B Brookhouse 3-9-12 **S Cherchi**
5 (11) 06004 **SUN POWER** 11 (V,D) A Brown 6-9-12 **C Hardie**
6 (8) 12006 **SIR RODNEYREDBLOOD** 76 (P,CD) J R Jenkins 6-9-11 **C Beasley**
7 (10) 15300 **TYKE** 19 (CD) M Appleby 3-9-11 **F Larson (3)**
8 (5) 16023 **CRYPTO QUEST** 11 (D) I W McInnes 4-9-10 **H Burns (3)**
9 (3) 02030 **CUBANISTA** 27 (V) Mrs P Sly 4-9-9 **S W Kelly**
10 (2) 45225 **WOOBAY** 40 Phillip Makin 4-9-8 **B Curtis**
11 (6) 35006 **PUFFABLE** 16 (P,T) Alice Haynes 3-9-7 **C Howarth (5)**
12 (12) 26450 **WADI BANI** 14 (P,T) S Durack 3-9-6 **T Eaves**
13 (13) 04065 **LADY NAGIN** 24 (H,CD) S P C Woods 3-9-5 **J Peate (3)**
14 (14) -6050 **HIGHER LAW** 50 K Frost 3-9-4 **B Sanderson (3)**

4-1 Crypto Quest, 5-1 Woobay, 15-2 Jill Rose, Sun Power, 8-1 others.

Hexham

Rob Wright

4.39 Belle Of Annandale
5.14 My Gift To You
5.45 Copper Beach
6.18 Minella Plus
6.48 Heros De Moutiers
7.18 So Be It

Going: good — **Sky Sports Racing**

4.39 Novices' Hurdle (£4,901: 2m 4f) (6)

1 FPP **GAUGHRAN** 89 C Grant 5-11-0 **T Midgley (3)**
2 60350 **KOPA KILANA** 18 (T) M Barnes 6-11-0 **Conor Rabbitt (5)**
3 2-613 **LISNAMULT LAD** 55 J McConnell (Ire) 6-11-0 **B Harvey (3)**
4 6-660 **THE SCAN MAN** 11 D McCain 5-11-0 **T Gillard**
5 1 **BELLE OF ANNANDALE** 18 A Keatley 4-10-11 **B Hughes**
6 P353 **RORY'S STORY** 31 (H,T) T Davidson 4-10-4 **H Reed**

11-10 Lisnamult Lad, 11-8 Belle Of Annandale, 7-1 Rory's Story, 12-1 others.

5.14 Handicap Hurdle (£5,043: 2m 7f) (11)

1 -1000 **BALKALIN** 18 (T) M Barnes 11-12-0 **C Rabbitt (5)**
2 P6P50 **BATTLE OF BENBURB** 23 (P,T) J McConnell (Ire) 6-11-10 **B Harvey (3)**
3 PP-3P **FOR JIM** 35 (V,D) J Candlish 11-11-10 **S Quinlan**
4 4-203 **HAVEYOUGOTMYMONEY** 77 (W,P) Paul Robson 5-11-0 **Craig Nichol**
5 05P60 **COLONEL MANDERSON** 18 (B,T) W Young Jnr 7-10-12 **D R Fox**
6 4P035 **OUT ON A JINK** 11 M Walford 5-10-11 **J Hamilton**
7 -6112 **MY GIFT TO YOU** 9 (T,BF) James Owen 5-10-9 **H Cobden**
8 5325- **RUMBLE B** 153 Justin Landy 9-10-3 **J Kington**
9 6-661 **DAKOTA BEAT** 33 (T,D) J Norton 8-10-2 **J Williamson (5)**
10 P-006 **HANNAH'S WALK** 16 (H,T) O Greenall & J Guerriero 5-10-2 **Toby Wynne (5)**
11 00-P0 **WEDDING STRESS** 43 (H) J Coward 5-10-2 **A Edwards**

11-4 My Gift To You, 4-1 Haveyougotmymoney, 5-1 Dakota Beat, 7-1 others.

5.45 Handicap Hurdle (£6,945: 2m 4f) (11)

1 2234- **PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL** F11 (P) B Ellison 6-12-0 **H Cobden**
2 -111P **BELVEDERE BLAST** 46 (B,CD) A Keatley 5-12-0 **B Hughes**
3 3P-5P **DALLAS DES PICTONS** 11 (P,D) D Sayer 10-11-12 **C Rabbitt**
4 5-240 **ONWARD ROUTE** 33 (T,C) R Menzies 9-11-11 **R Chapman**
5 -3123 **COPPER BEACH** 18 (D) Sue Smith 6-11-10 **T Midgley (3)**
6 0-424 **COUSU MAIN** 46 S Corbett 7-11-6 **Craig Nichol**
7 5-224 **CITY DERBY** 46 (P,D) Lizzie Quinlan 7-11-4 **S Quinlan**
8 40-10 **FENNA'S LOSS** 46 (T,CD) M Walford 6-11-3 **J Hamilton**
9 21/50 **CALUM GILHOOLEY** 11 D Thompson 9-11-0 **J Thompson (7)**
10 61-44 **KAJAKI** 18 (P,D) N Richards 10-10-13 **D McMenamin**
11 52132 **MALANGEN** 18 (D) Miss L Harrison 8-10-7 **P J Kavanagh (5)**

7-2 Malangen, 4-1 Copper Beach, 9-2 Belvedere Blast, 11-2 others.

6.18 Handicap Hurdle (£5,730: 2m) (7)

1 11-30 **HORN CAPE** 46 (BF,CD) B Haslam 6-12-0 **R McLernon**
2 00-03 **MINELLA PLUS** 16 (D) D McCain 6-11-12 **B Hughes**
3 61433 **ALLBETSOFF** 16 (D) M Walford 7-11-10 **J Hamilton**
4 100-P **FRIGHTENED RABBIT** 35 (CD) Miss L Harrison 11-11-7 **C Rabbitt**
5 6F-0D **REAMS OF LOVE** 84 (P,D) D J Jeffreys 5-10-13 **K Woods**
6 -005P **JUST HANNAH** 45 D Brooke 6-10-13 **J Kington**
7 05263 **PATEEN** 11 (T,V,CD) J Bedi 11-10-12 **A Anderson (5)**

9-4 Allbetsoff, 11-4 Horn Cape, 7-2 Minella Plus, 5-1 Pateen, 14-1 others.

6.48 Handicap Chase (£5,360: 2m) (9)

1 34-24 **HEROS DE MOUTIERS** 36 (W) D McCain 6-12-0 **B Hughes**
2 4340- **THREE PLATOON** F22 (T) R Menzies 5-11-12 **N Moscrop**
3 P-24P **FINALSHOT** 45 (T) M Rowley 10-11-12 **A Edwards**
4 -6543 **CHECK MY PULSE** F6 (T,V,D) R Menzies 7-11-7 **J Hamilton**
5 4P25U **SEA PRINCE** 36 (P) R M Smith 6-11-4 **K Woods**
6 02602 **PROSPECT HOUSE** 18 (P) P Niven 5-10-13 **D McMenamin**
7 1-150 **MAGIC MIKE** 13 (H) Paul Robson 6-10-13 **Craig Nichol**
8 0-066 **INGLEBY MACKENZIE** 35 (T,D) Ewan Whillans 9-10-7 **S Quinlan**
9 40535 **CONFELICITY** 9 A B Hamilton 5-10-6 **D R Fox**

100-30 Prospect House, 4-1 Heros De Moutiers, 5-1 others.

7.18 Handicap Chase (£5,624: 3m) (10)

1 2P224 **SO BE IT** 35 (T) W Young Jnr 7-12-0 **J Hamilton**
2 2543- **MANCE RAYDER** 173 (B,D) H Hogarth 10-11-13 **B Hughes**
3 -324P **AHEAD OF THE FIELD** 11 (BF) J McConnell (Ire) 8-11-12 **B Harvey**
4 26U4- **TOP DECISION** 209 (T) S Drinkwater 10-11-10 **N Fox (5)**
5 0U-32 **CASH AGAIN** 68 (P,C) S G West 11-11-7 **B Lynn (3)**
6 P-433 **HUMPS AND BUMPS** 13 (B) D Brooke 10-10-9 **J Kington**
7 P5-21 **HAPY LA VIE** 81 (P,CD) J Ewart 6-10-8 **D McMenamin**
8 41-P5 **WEST LAWN** 106 J Walton 7-10-8 **Craig Nichol**
9 P0-55 **ELUSIVE RED** 73 (P) F Murtagh 9-10-2 **S Quinlan**
10 PP4P5 **OLD PAGE** 11 (P) D Thompson 6-10-2 **N Moscrop**

11-4 Hapy La Vie, 9-2 Cash Again, 11-2 Humps And Bumps, 6-1 others.

Yesterday's racing results

Bangor-on-Dee

Going: good

1.50 (2m 7f 7yd hdle) 1, **Halifax** (Conor Ring, 5-1); 2, Finisk River (5-1); 3, Blakeney Point (18-1). 7 ran. 2¼l, 4l. G Harris.

2.25 (2m 145yd hdle) 1, **Littel Flour** (P W Wadge, 5-2); 2, Arctic Fox (5-4 fav); 3, Luckie Money (25-1). 6 ran. NR: Come On Du Berlais, Princess Unique, Time For Joy. 4¾l, 8½l. J Candlish.

3.00 (3m 5yd ch) 1, **Dieu Vivant** (Toby Wynne, 14-1); 2, Quid Pro Quo (5-6 fav); 3, Fidux (6-1). 6 ran. 13l, 12l. O Greenall & J Guerriero.

3.35 (2m 4f 72yd ch) 1, **Vintage Fizz** (Charlie Hammond, 7-1); 2, Go On Chez (7-2); 3, The Big Jetaway (8-11 fav). 4 ran. 2¾l, 18l. Jedd O'Keeffe.

4.10 (2m 145yd hdle) 1, **Swift Tuttle** (Toby Wynne, 33-1); 2, Theonlywayiswessex (7-1); 3, Choirmaster (15-8 fav). 6 ran. Nk, ¾l. O Greenall & J Guerriero.

4.45 (2m 3f 123yd hdle) 1, **Anger Management** (S Bowen, 14-1); 2, Never No Trouble (100-30); 3, Punk Rock Girl (20-1). 11 ran. NR: Ragamuffin. Nk, 3½l. J Ryan.

Placepot: £1,145.80. Quadpot: £598.50.

Goodwood

Going: good to soft

1.35 (1m 3f 44yd) 1, **Mount Olympus** (Rossa Ryan, 4-1 fav); 2, Dundory (13-2); 3, Lhebayeb (11-2). 12 ran. NR: Millions Memories, Total Lockdown. 1l, 2¼l. A King.

2.10 (1m) 1, **Caviar Heights** (Oisin Murphy, 4-6 fav); 2, Midair (7-1); 3, Louis Quatorze (5-1). 9 ran. 1l, 4¾l. A M Balding.

2.45 (6f) 1, **Liv My Life** (W Buick, 10-1); 2, Je Ne Sais Quoi (4-1); 3, Snafiya (7-1). 5 ran. NR: Make It Easy. ¾l, 1l. R Hannon.

3.20 (2m) 1, **Novel Legend** (D Muscutt, 11-4); 2, Grand Providence (9-4 fav); 3, Aggagio (9-2). 8 ran. NR: Temporize. Nk, nk. J R Fanshawe.

3.55 (5f) 1, **Glamorous Breeze** (Gina Mangan, 2-1 fav); 2, Cover Up (4-1); 3, Four Adaay (9-2). 6 ran. Nk, ¾l. C Mason.

4.30 (1m 1f 197yd) 1, **Believe In Stars** (R Kingscote, 9-2); 2, King Lear (4-6 fav); 3, Lope De Light (10-3). 8 ran. Hd, 6½l. Sir Michael Stoute.

5.05 (6f) 1, **Live In The Moment** (K T O'Neill, 15-2); 2, Amazonian Dream (11-2); 3, Aplomb (9-1). 11 ran. NR: Coco Bear. Nk, ½l. Alice Haynes.

Jackpot: Not won. Pool of £10,837.43 carried forward to Kempton Park today.

Placepot: £27.70. Quadpot: £12.20.

Hamilton Park

Going: good (good to firm in places)

4.40 (5f 7yd) 1, **Almarada Prince** (S H James, 6-4); 2, Curious Rover (Evens fav); 3, Circus Lion (12-1). 7 ran. NR: Gladly Ever After. ¾l, 2¼l. Craig Lidster.

5.15 (1m 4f 15yd) 1, **Spectacular Style** (David Egan, 1-7 fav); 2, Weigh Anchor (9-2); 3, Fly Awhile Johnny (80-1). 4 ran. 20l, 7½l. R Varian.

5.45 (6f 6yd) 1, **Bellarchi** (S H James, 7-4 fav); 2, Swordplay (17-2); 3, Indication Call (6-1). 6 ran. 2¼l, 2¼l. Grant Tuer.

6.15 (6f 6yd) 1, **Iris Dancer** (A Mullen, 11-4); 2, Sacred Falls (4-1); 3, Creative Style (8-1). 6 ran. NR: Tellus. Nk, ½l. T Davidson.

6.45 (1m 1f 35yd) 1, **Havana Party** (B A Curtis, 2-1 fav); 2, We Still Believe (11-4); 3, Chinese Spirit (15-2). 8 ran. NR: Blazer Two, Flying Moon. 2¾l, hd. I Jardine.

7.15 (1m 68yd) 1, **Absolute Dream** (Connor Murtagh, 6-1); 2, Purple Gown (6-1); 3, Zumaaty (8-1). 7 ran. NR: Elettaria. 1l, hd. R A Fahey.

7.45 (6f 6yd) 1, **Giselles Izzy** (B A Curtis, Evens fav); 2, The Gay Blade (11-2); 3, Elladora (7-2). 8 ran. NR: Global Humor, Muatadel, Rhythm. 2l, nk. I Jardine.

Placepot: £26.50.
Quadpot: £22.60.

Ripon

Going: good (good to firm in places)

4.20 (1m) 1, **Karmology** (Pierre-Louis Jamin, 9-1); 2, Doom (1-25 fav). 1l, K R Burke.

4.55 (6f) 1, **Bill's Baar** (D C Costello, 11-4); 2, Rogue Enforcer (8-11 fav); 3, Want Want (4-1). 6 ran. ½l, 7½l. A Keatley.

5.30 (6f) 1, **Eldeyaar** (Cam Hardie, 12-1); 2, Wade's Magic (9-2); 3, Chester Le Streak (7-2 fav). 14 ran. NR: Miss Willows. ½l, ¾l. A Brittain.

6.00 (6f) 1, **Fortamour** (Joanna Mason, 9-2); 2, Strong Johnson (9-4 fav); 3, Hurstwood (11-1). 11 ran. ½l, hd. B Haslam.

6.30 (1m) 1, **Eastern Charm** (Tom Marquand, 3-1 jt-fav); 2, Gone (11-1); 3, Dungar Glory (7-1). 7 ran. ½l, ns. W J Haggas.

7.00 (1m 4f 10yd) 1, **Edwina Sheeran** (Tom Marquand, 13-8 fav); 2, Blue Antares (2-1); 3, Lincoln Rockstar (4-1). 7 ran. NR: Mascani. ½l, ½l. R Fell & S Murray.

7.30 (1m) 1, **All Dunn** (J Fanning, 3-1); 2, Ribkana (16-1); 3, Paco's Pride (5-4 fav). 7 ran. 1½l, 2l. H Bethell.

Placepot: £78.30. Quadpot: £6.60.

Bairstow's fireworks in vain

Steve James



England v New Zealand

Trent Bridge (England won toss): New Zealand beat England by six wickets

Series drawn at 2-2 then, as New Zealand strolled to a comfortable victory at Trent Bridge in a fourth match that was conspicuously one-sided thanks to some explosive batting from Tim Seifert, Glenn Phillips and Mark Chapman, whose combined efforts exposed England's inability to aid Jonny Bairstow's muscular 73 that underpinned their total of 175 for eight.

England's bowlers were taken apart, with the exception of the 19-year-old leg spinner Rehan Ahmed, who showed excellence in taking two for 27 from his four overs. That was not matched by his spinning colleagues, while New Zealand's spinners were superb again, with Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi and and Rachin Ravindra sharing six wickets.

England really should have scored at least 200 after Moeen Ali, captaining in place of Jos Buttler — who was rested until he had to make an appearance as a substitute — had won what seemed a good toss on a pitch that helped the spinners. It was interesting, however, that in the commentary box the former captain Eoin Morgan said that he would rather have chased than batted first, as Ali did.

"They bowled well through the middle and there were a couple of bits we didn't quite get right," Bairstow said. "We probably should have scored more in those last seven overs."

Bairstow played quite magnificently, though. He was soon into his stride on this ground at which he almost single-handedly launched Bazball last year, picking Matt Henry up for four and six to the shorter boundary on the leg side in the innings' second over, and then greeting Kyle Jamieson's first ball with a six to the same area.

England passed fifty in the fifth over and by the end of the powerplay were 63 without loss, with Bairstow taking the bulk of the strike and reaching 48 from 24 balls.

Poor Will Jacks was just a bystander and he soon edged Sodhi behind attempting to cut. Frankly, it was a surprise that Ben Duckett was not preferred to him here, but Jacks certainly cannot complain about lack of opportunity. Sadly, he did not take those chances in this series.

Bairstow made his half-century in only 26 balls, and by the halfway mark England were 92 for one, but, as a harbinger of what was to come collectively, Dawid Malan made a typically circumspect start to his innings.

Malan got going with a juicy full toss from Sodhi that hit the fielder Daryl Mitchell in the face off the rope as it went for four, but it was still Bairstow doing all the big hitting, and he kept targeting the short leg-side boundary until he did so once too often when toeing Santner to Mitchell at wide long-on. Bairstow's 73 had taken only 41 balls.

Malan had to accelerate and he began doing so in slapping Jamieson back past him for four. The beanpole Jamieson, so short of cricket recently, then bowled three wide balls before Malan slashed and then clipped another two fours. Jamieson's two overs had gone for 35.

England were 126 for two after 13 overs. It looked a decent launchpad, but England just fizzled out. Harry Brook never got going, top-edging a filthy long hop from Sodhi to deep square leg, and Malan was well caught at deep square leg, sweeping at Santner.

Ali went third ball, sweeping as well to the same bowler, this time to deep midwicket, and England were staggering at 140 for five after 16 overs.

Sam Curran scythed his first ball for four, but he holed out to long-on off Ravindra, the left-arm spinner, from his fourth, allowing Ahmed to strike his third ball for six. He was run out, though, and it was left to Liam Livingstone, another not finding his true touch, to make 26 from 20 balls before being dismissed from the final ball of the innings, as Matt Henry bowled an excellent final over that went for only four runs.

Finn Allen gave New Zealand the best possible start to their reply, launching the first ball of the innings from Curran over extra cover for four and in truth the touring side were in complete control from that point.

Bairstow had been due to keep, but suffered a minor shoulder injury batting, so Buttler appeared with the gloves, although Ali continued to lead the side. There was no Gus Atkinson here but Luke Wood did bowl a swinging Allen in the second over with the score already at 22. Seifert, opening instead of the rested Devon Conway, then took a liking to Brydon Carse, hoisting a huge six to the longer boundary and then a four down the ground.

He didn't mind Wood either, whose first two overs cost 28, or Adil Rashid, whom he hit for an extraordinary, enormous straight six off the back foot.

Seifert had made 42 from 24 balls



Chapman and Ravindra celebrate as New Zealand levelled the series



Bairstow continued his fine form in the series by hitting six sixes in his 41-ball 73

Scoreboard

ENGLAND	R	B	M
†J M Bairstow c Mitchell b Santner	73	41	49
W G Jacks c Seifert b Sodhi	16	15	28
D J Malan c Jamieson b Santner	26	21	43
H C Brook c Chapman b Sodhi	4	8	14
L S Livingstone c Southee b Henry	26	20	33
*M M Ali c Phillips b Santner	1	3	4
S M Curran c Allen b Ravindra	5	4	8
R Ahmed run out	11	7	10
B A Carse not out	0	1	2
Extras (b 1, lb 1, w 11)	13		
TOTAL (8 wkts, 20 overs)	175		

A U Rashid and L Wood did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-65, 2-105, 3-126, 4-138, 5-140, 6-150, 7-172, 8-175.
Bowling Southee 4-0-39-0; Henry 4-0-31-1; Santner 4-0-30-3; Jamieson 2-0-35-0; Sodhi 4-0-21-2; Ravindra 2-0-17-1.

NEW ZEALAND	R	B	M
F H Allen b Wood	16	6	8
†T L Seifert c and b Ahmed	48	32	37
D J Mitchell run out	14	7	21
G D Phillips c Curran b Ahmed	42	25	25
M S Chapman not out	40	25	32
R Ravindra not out	17	9	12
Extras (lb 1, w 1)	2		
TOTAL (4 wkts, 17.2 overs)	179		

M J Santner, K A Jamieson, I S Sodhi, *T G Southee and M J Henry did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-22, 2-75, 3-83, 4-141.
Bowling Curran 3-0-32-0; Wood 2-0-28-1; Carse 2-0-27-0; Rashid 4-0-41-0; Ahmed 4-0-27-2; Ali 2.2-0-23-0.

Umpires A G Wharf and D J Millns (both England).
Man of the match M J Santner (New Zealand). **Series** J M Bairstow (England).
● *Four-match series drawn 2-2*
Details: First T20 England won by seven wickets (Chester-le-Street). **Second** England won by 95 runs (Emirates Old Trafford). **Third** New Zealand won by 74 runs (Edgbaston).

Results and scoreboards

Cricket

LV County Championship
Division One: Essex v Middlesex

Chelmsford (second day of four): Essex, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are 229 runs ahead of Middlesex

Essex First Innings (overnight 303-9)

S J Cook c Higgins b De Caires	19
J A Porter not out	10
Extras (b 4, lb 7, nb 6)	17
Total (98.2 overs)	**304**

Fall of wickets 1-122, 2-135, 3-148, 4-162, 5-169, 6-235, 7-235, 8-260, 9-279.
Bowling Bamber 18-4-51-1; Roland-Jones 19-5-58-1; De Caires 39.2-8-106-8; Higgins 14-5-39-0; Hollman 6-0-27-0; Robson 2-0-12-0.

Second Innings

N L J Browne c Simpson b Roland-Jones	35
A N Cook not out	44
*T Westley not out	17
Extras (lb 8)	8
Total (1 wkt, 37 overs)	**104**

Fall of wicket 1-64.
Bowling Bamber 8-3-26-0; De Caires 13-3-27-0; Higgins 3-0-14-0; Roland-Jones 8-3-16-1; Hollman 5-1-13-0.

Middlesex First Innings

M D Stoneman c Walter b Porter	8
S D Robson b Porter	10
J B Cracknell c Harmer b Porter	0
J L B Davies lbw b S J Cook	5
M D E Holden c and b Porter	30
†J A Simpson lbw b Porter	16
R F Higgins b S J Cook	44
L B K Hollman lbw b S J Cook	20
J M De Caires not out	29
*T S Roland-Jones c Critchley b Harmer	11
E R Bamber lbw b Porter	0
Extras (lb 2, nb 4)	6
Total (53.5 overs)	**179**

Fall of wickets 1-8, 2-8, 3-21, 4-25, 5-59, 6-100, 7-138, 8-143, 9-168.
Bowling Porter 12.5-1-34-6; S J Cook 10-1-43-3; Harmer 22-6-73-1; Yadav 9-2-27-0.
Umpires I D Blackwell and R J Warren.

Hampshire v Somerset

Ageas Bowl (third day of four): Somerset, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, need 400 runs to beat Hampshire

Hampshire First Innings 308 (L A Dawson 115; J A Brooks 5 for 56)

Second Innings (overnight 45-0)

T E Albert c and b Wagner	31
F S Middleton b Brooks	52
N R T Gubbins not out	139
*J M Vince c Rew b Wagner	63
T J Prest not out	33
Extras (b 5, lb 5, nb 2)	12
Total (3 wkts dec, 87 overs)	**330**

Fall of wickets 1-80, 2-89, 3-251.
Bowling Gregory 4-2-8-0; Brooks 8-3-19-1; Wagner 13-2-56-2; Bashir 30-5-122-0; Green 13-2-43-0; Umeed 9-0-35-0; Abell 10-0-37-0.

Somerset First Innings 137 (K H D Barker 5 for 32)

Second Innings

T A Lammonby st Brown b Dawson	9
S R Dickson not out	63
*T B Abell c Vince b Fuller	5
A R I Umeed not out	21
Extras (nb 4)	4
Total (2 wkts, 32 overs)	**102**

Fall of wickets 1-25, 2-38.
Bowling Barker 7-1-21-0; Abbas 4-1-4-0; Abbott 4-0-9-0; Dawson 9-2-26-1; Fuller 5-1-26-1; Prest 3-0-16-0.
Umpires B J Debenham and R J Bailey.

Northamptonshire v Lancashire

Northampton (third day of four): Northamptonshire, with five second-innings wickets in hand, are 81 runs behind Lancashire

Northamptonshire First Innings 232 (S M Whiteman 79)

Second Innings

M H Azad c Bell b Hartley	30
E N Gay lbw b Bailey	29
S M Whiteman b Williams	54
*L A Procter lbw b Williams	1
R I Keogh c Salt b Bailey	29
S A Zaib not out	37
†L D McManus not out	17
Extras (b 4, lb 2, nb 8)	14
Total (5 wkts, 67 overs)	**211**

Fall of wickets 1-47, 2-79, 3-82, 4-132, 5-165.
Bowling Bailey 18-5-70-2; Williams 14-5-26-2; Balderson 9-0-38-0; Hartley 26-6-71-1.

Lancashire First Innings (overnight 392-7)

G P Balderson c Whiteman b Keogh	115
T W Hartley c Gay b White	28
T E Bailey b Zaib	77
J M Blatherwick not out	15
Extras (b 6, lb 7, nb 10)	23
Total (142.3 overs)	**524**

Fall of wickets 1-11, 2-52, 3-62, 4-97, 5-189, 6-189, 7-339, 8-406, 9-474.
Bowling White 34-9-99-4; Sanderson 26-7-91-2; Taylor 29-5-120-2; Procter 9-2-51-0; Keogh 29-3-100-1; Broad 9-1-28-0; Zaib 6.3-2-22-1.
Umpires M H A Syed and M Newell.

Surrey v Warwickshire

Kia Oval (third day of four): Surrey (22pts) beat Warwickshire (3) by an innings and 97 runs

Surrey First Innings 396 (B T Foakes 125, C T Steel 71, D P Sibley 65, J L Smith 60; E G Barnard 5 for 66)

Warwickshire First Innings 161 (M G K Burgess 54; K A J Roach 4 for 64)

Second Innings (overnight 126-7)

D R Mousley c Foakes b Worrall	61
H J H Brookes c Overton b Worrall	7
O J Hannon-Dalby not out	1
C Rushworth b Clark	6
Extras (lb 7, nb 10)	17
Total (37 overs)	**138**

Fall of wickets 1-19, 2-19, 3-20, 4-20, 5-35, 6-110, 7-122, 8-130, 9-131.
Bowling Roach 7-1-25-1; Worrall 9-1-25-5; Clark 8-1-26-4; Overton 5-1-16-0; Lawes 5-0-30-0; Steel 3-0-9-0.
Umpires S J O'Shaughnessy and G D Lloyd.

Division Two: Durham v Sussex

Chester-le-Street (third day of four): Sussex, with one second-innings wicket in hand, are 24 runs ahead of Durham

Sussex First Innings 266 (T P Alsop 59, T G R Clark 58, T J Haines 51; M W Parkinson 4 for 58)

Second Innings

T G R Clark lbw b Potts	2
T J Haines b Potts	12
T P Alsop st Robinson b Parkinson	18
*C A Pujara lbw b Parkinson	51
J M Coles c Borthwick b Potts	5
†O J Carter lbw b de Leede	80
F J Hudson-Prentice not out	50
J J Carson b de Leede	8
A Karvelas c Borthwick b de Leede	9
J D Unadkat c Potts b Parkinson	10
H T Crocombe not out	1
Extras (b 4, lb 1, nb 12)	17
Total (9 wkts, 82 overs)	**263**

Fall of wickets 1-5, 2-24, 3-55, 4-70, 5-153, 6-202, 7-214, 8-232, 9-250.
Bowling Raine 16-1-55-0; Potts 21-4-51-3; Parkinson 25-4-75-3; Drissell 11-1-41-0; De Leede 9-0-36-3.

Durham First Innings (overnight 424-5)

G Clark c sub b Crocombe	128
B F W de Leede c Carter b Crocombe	103
B A Raine c Coles b Crocombe	5
M J Potts c Carter b Crocombe	6
G S Drissell not out	10
M W Parkinson not out	0
Extras (b 4, lb 3, w 1, nb 4)	12
Total (9 wkts dec, 119 overs)	**505**

Fall of wickets 1-6, 2-152, 3-168, 4-214, 5-265, 6-472, 7-480, 8-494, 9-495.
Bowling Unadkat 24-3-93-1; Karvelas 20-2-83-1; Hudson-Prentice 17-1-68-0; Carson 28-3-126-3; Crocombe 18-1-93-4; Coles 10-1-25-0; Haines 2-0-10-0.
Umpires M A Gough and J Shantry.

Leicestershire v Gloucestershire

Leicester (third day of four): Leicestershire (19pts) beat Gloucestershire (3) by eight wickets

Gloucestershire First Innings 159 (C D J Dent 51; T A R Scriven 4 for 30)

Second Innings (overnight 179-8)

Z Akhter not out	41
D C Goodman b Mulder	15
L A Charlesworth lbw b Mulder	4
Extras (b 4, lb 8)	12
Total (71.4 overs)	**212**

Fall of wickets 1-9, 2-10, 3-80, 4-108, 5-122, 6-138, 7-143, 8-146, 9-200.
Bowling Wright 16-7-37-2; Mulder 19.4-3-61-4; Salisbury 9-3-26-0; Scriven 14-4-43-3; Ackermann 11-1-26-1; Kimber 2-0-7-0.

Leicestershire First Innings 204 (R K Patel 73; Z Akhter 4 for 46)

Second Innings

R K Patel c Bracey b Shaw	1
S G Budinger c Bracey b Shaw	3

as England falter

STEVE BOND/PPAUK/SHUTTERSTOCK



but England let slip a position of strength, from 105 for one in the 11th over, to leave New Zealand a chaseable target of 176

when his side reached 73 for one from their powerplay.

It took a remarkable piece of fielding from Wood haring round the cover boundary to run out Mitchell as he returned for a second, as Ahmed bowled a fine first over, conceding only five.

He soon claimed a caught-and-bowled chance off Seifert, who had made 48, and his success meant we now got a rare sighting of Ali's off spin, but Phillips pulled him for a mountainous six and after ten overs New Zealand were 96 for three.

Phillips holed out off Ahmed for 42 off 25 balls, but Chapman pulled Curran for four to tie the scores, and Ravindra finished off a second successive thrashing for England.

Brook has time to stake claim

CONTINUED FROM BACK

response since missing out. And that's what great players do.

"There's a lot to play out before we pick the first XI against New Zealand in India. We've always said it's a provisional squad. Everyone will get a really good opportunity to show what they've got."

On Brook's omission, Mott said: "Harry has not played much one-day cricket over the past few years. He's been exceptionally good in Test cricket and T20 leagues around the world but the guys we did pick have done a great job for England over the past few years.

"Every team will be tinkering, and every player, inside or outside of the team, should be determined to put their best foot forward."

Squads must be finalised by September 28 and Mott hinted he was unhappy with having to show his hand so early.

"I find it hard when you look at the 15 to think anyone doesn't deserve their spot," he said. "In an ideal world we probably don't have to play our hand until a bit later but we had to get the squad out for this series. A lot can change. There's a lot of water under the bridge before we get to that game with New Zealand."

Porter keeps Essex title hopes flickering

LV= County Championship
Mark Baldwin



Porter claimed six wickets on day two

Jamie Porter's six for 34 at Chelmsford on Tuesday put Essex into a position of strength at the midway point of a match against Middlesex they know they must win to maintain a realistic chance of overhauling the County Championship favourites Surrey.

Essex lead by 229 after bowling out Middlesex for 179 in reply to their 304 and then reaching 104 for one in their second innings, with Alastair Cook still there on 44.

Yet, even if they do manage to force victory, Essex will remain 18 points adrift of Surrey after the 2022 champions' brutal dismissal of Warwickshire by an innings and 97 runs at the Oval. After claiming 17 wickets in ruthless fashion on day two, and enforcing the follow-on, Surrey took only 15 minutes on Tuesday morning to wrap up Warwickshire's last three second-innings wickets.

Dan Worrall ended with five for 25, giving him match figures of eight for 59, and Jordan Clark four for 26 as Warwickshire's overnight 126 for seven became — in a four-over flash — 138 all out. It was Surrey's eighth victory from 12 matches so far and their high-class pace battery, usually five-strong in championship cricket, is both juggernaut and surgical knife.

"Essex are a very good side and we are expecting them to keep winning, especially at home," Rory Burns, the Surrey captain aiming to lead his native county to a third championship in six seasons, said. "There is a lot of excitement in our dressing room about what we can achieve, but the title race is certainly not over yet."

The two title contenders both have fixtures against Northamptonshire and Hampshire remaining.

First, though, Essex need to beat Middlesex to prevent Surrey from taking an almost unassailable lead and it will be strange indeed if Simon Harmer, the prolific off spinner, waits as long in Middlesex's second innings for his first wicket as he did yesterday — his 21st over — as Sam Cook, with three for 43, provided the metronomic Porter with the most penetrative support.

T20 'game-changer' for IOC

Martyn Ziegler Chief Sports Reporter

Cricket will "transform" the TV rights market for the Olympics in India when its place at the Los Angeles 2028 Games is confirmed, with the IOC hoping for a tenfold increase in the value.

As revealed by The Times, Olympic chiefs are set to give cricket the go-ahead this week to be included as a new sport for LA 2028.

Michael Payne, the former marketing and broadcast rights director for the IOC, said cricket would be a "game-changer" for the IOC in the region. One source with knowledge of cricket's TV rights said the IOC can expect the value of its rights in India to go up from about $20 million (£16 million) for Paris 2024 to $200 million (£160 million) for LA.

Payne told The Times: "For the IOC, the one region of the world where the Olympics has underperformed is India and Pakistan and putting cricket on the programme would be a game-changer.

"You look at what the IOC currently gets for TV rights in India and what the IPL generates and there is no question that having cricket as an Olympic sport would transform the media rights market there."

Payne said that including tennis as an Olympic sport had helped it break through into China, and that the USA's Dream Team playing at the Barcelona 1992 Games led to a surge of global interest in the NBA.

He said that cricket has as much to gain from the Olympics as the IOC has from including the sport, but that it is "now or never" if it wants to become a permanent addition to the programme.

The IOC's executive board will decide additional sports for the LA Games on Friday and sources say men's and women's T20 cricket will be included.

*L J Hill not out	62
C N Ackermann not out	93
Extras (lb 1, w 4, nb 4)	9
Total (2 wkts, 41.4 overs)	**168**

Fall of wickets 1-4, 2-7.
Bowling Shaw 10-5-24-2; Goodman 10-2-32-0; Charlesworth 8-2-30-0; Akhter 4-0-28-0; Khan 7.4-1-36-0; Price 2-0-17-0.
Umpires P J Hartley and N Ashraf.

Worcestershire v Glamorgan

Worcester (third day of four): Worcestershire (20pts) beat Glamorgan (3) by 80 runs

Worcestershire First Innings 284 (B L D'Oliveira 74 not out, L V van Beek 53)

Second Innings (overnight 127-8)

*B L D'Oliveira c Northeast b Harris	11
J Leach not out	10
D Y Pennington c and b McIlroy	2
Extras (b 1, lb 9, nb 2)	12
Total (56.5 overs)	**145**

Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-81, 3-90, 4-97, 5-116, 6-116, 7-116, 8-121, 9-142.
Bowling McIlroy 15.5-3-34-5; Harris 16-4-39-3; Carlson 15-2-44-0; Ul-Hassan 10-5-18-2.

Glamorgan First Innings 170 (L V van Beek 4 for 42)

Second Innings

Z Ul-Hassan b Allison	7
E J Byrom lbw b Leach	0
C A Ingram c Libby b Van Beek	14
S A Northeast c Hose b Leach	30
*K S Carlson lbw b Van Beek	0
W T Root not out	84
†C B Cooke c Libby b Allison	12
B I Kellaway b Van Beek	0
J A R Harris c Haynes b Pennington	14
T van der Gugten c Hose b Leach	1
J P McIlroy b Van Beek	2
Extras (b 4, lb 9, nb 2)	15
Total (52.1 overs)	**179**

Fall of wickets 1-3, 2-30, 3-30, 4-37, 5-85, 6-129, 7-130, 8-166, 9-169.
Bowling Leach 15-3-39-3; Pennington 12-3-38-1; Van Beek 12.1-3-46-4; Allison 9-1-40-2; Libby 3-1-2-0; D'Oliveira 1-0-1-0.
Umpires S Shanmugam and N L Bainton.

Yorkshire v Derbyshire

Scarborough (third day of four): Derbyshire, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, need 506 runs to beat Yorkshire

Yorkshire First Innings 297 (J H Wharton 58; A K Dal 5 for 72)

Second Innings (overnight 179-2)

J H Wharton c Madsen b Conners	38
*S M Khan c and b Thomson	86
G C H Hill c Madsen b Wagstaff	79
†J A Tattersall lbw b Thomson	15
M L Revis c Scrimshaw b Thomson	106
D M Bess c Dal b Wagstaff	0
J A Thompson c Scrimshaw b Thomson	64
M D Fisher not out	11
Extras (b 6, lb 4, nb 4)	14
Total (9 wkts dec, 105.4 overs)	**520**

Fall of wickets 1-100, 2-116, 3-223, 4-238, 5-272, 6-366, 7-366, 8-491, 9-520.
Bowling Chappell 17-2-85-0; Conners 19-5-68-1; Scrimshaw 10-0-56-0; Dal 4-0-28-0; Thomson 38.4-1-190-5; Du Plooy 4-0-24-0; Wagstaff 13-0-59-2.

Derbyshire First Innings 247 (W L Madsen 93, M D Wagstaff 52)

Second Innings

H R C Came not out	33
M D Wagstaff lbw b Bess	9
†B D Guest not out	16
Extras (b 4, lb 1, nb 2)	7
Total (1 wkt, 26 overs)	**65**

Fall of wicket 1-24.
Bowling Coad 5-3-6-0; Hill 4-1-17-0; Bess 9-3-13-1; Thompson 5-2-11-0; Revis 3-0-13-0.
Umpires N Pratt and A C Harris.

Cycling

Tour of Britain

Leading positions: Third stage (Goole to Beverley, 154.7km): 1, O Kooij (Neth, Jumbo-Visma) 3hr 25min 58sec; 2, D Van Poppel (Neth, BORA-hansgrohe); 3, E Vernon (GB); 4, M Kanter (Ger, Movistar); 5, R Tiller (Nor, Uno-X Pro Cycling); 6, T Pidcock (GB, INEOS Grenadiers); 7, R Donaldson (GB, Trinity Racing); 8, C Van Uden (Neth, dsm-firmenich); 9, R Townsend (Ire, Bolton Equities Black Spoke); 10, D Bomboi (Bel, TdT-Unibet) all same time. **Overall** 1, Kooij 9:39:51; 2, Van Poppel; 3, M Kanter (Ger, Movistar); 4 Vernon; 5, W Van Aert (Bel, Jumbo-Visma); 6 Pidcock; 7, Bomboi; 8, G Serrano (Sp, Movistar); 9, Tiller; 10, Townsend all at same.

Vuelta a España

Leading positions: Tenth stage, Individual time-trial (Valladolid, 25.8 km): 1, F Ganna (It, INEOS Grenadiers) 27min 39sec; 2, R Evenepoel (Bel, Soudal Quick-Step) at 16sec behind; 3, P Roglic (Slove, Jumbo-Visma) 36; 4, J Almeida (Por, UAE Team Emirates) 50; 5, A Vlasov (Russ, BORA-hansgrohe) 52; 6, M Cattaneo (It, Soudal Quick-Step) 1min 9sec. **Overall** 1, S Kuss (US, Jumbo-Visma) 35hr 52min 38sec; 2, M Soler (Sp, UAE Team Emirates) at 26sec; 3, Evenepoel 1min 9sec; 4, Roglic 1:36; 5, L Martinez (Fr, Groupama-FDJ) 2:02; 6, Almeida 2:16.

Football

Papa John's EFL Trophy: North: Group A Barrow 0 Blackpool 2. **Group B** Port Vale 1 Crewe 0; Wrexham 1 Newcastle U-21 0. **Group C** Accrington Stanley 1 Carlisle 0; Harrogate Town 2 Nottingham Forest U-21 1. **Group D** Fleetwood Town 2 Tranmere 0. **Group E** Bolton 3 Salford 0. **Group F** Barnsley 2 Grimsby 0. **South: Group A** Forest Green 3 Shrewsbury 0. **Group B** Crawley Town 4 Charlton 3. **Group C** AFC Wimbledon 1 Stevenage 1 (AFC Wimbledon win 6-5 on pens). **Group E** Gillingham 2 Leyton Orient 1. **Group F** Northampton 1 Oxford Utd 3. **Group H** Bristol Rovers 4 Cheltenham 1.

Vanarama National North Banbury 0 Alfreton 0; Bishop's Stortford 1 Rushall Olympic 4; Blyth Spartans 4 Farsley Celtic 0; Chester 1 Hereford 2; Darlington 0 Boston 0; Gloucester City 0 Buxton 0; Kings Lynn 2 Brackley 2; Peterborough Sports 1 Curzon Ashton 1; Scunthorpe 3 South Shields 1; Southport 3 Scarborough 1; Tamworth 2 Chorley 1; Warrington 3 Spennymoor 3. **South** Chippenham 3 Taunton 3; Dartford 1 Slough 2; Hampton & Richmond 1 Weymouth 0; Maidstone 0 Aveley 1; St Albans 2 Dover 0; Tonbridge Angels 0 Braintree 0; Torquay 3 Farnborough 0; Truro 1 Bath City 1; Weston-super-Mare 2 Yeovil 3; Worthing 2 Welling 0.

SPFL Trust Trophy: Third round Ayr Utd 0 Falkirk 1.

Tennis

US Open

Flushing Meadows, New York (seeds in brackets; British players in blue): **Men: Singles: Fourth round** (3) D Medvedev (Russ) bt (13) A De Minaur (Aus) 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2; (12) A Zverev (Ger) bt (6) J Sinner (It) 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3. **Quarter-final** (2) N Djokovic (Serbia) bt (9) T Fritz (US) 6-1, 6-4, 6-4. **Doubles: Third round** (15) N Lammons (US) and J Withrow (US) bt (1) W Koolhof (Neth) and N Skupski (GB) 7-6 (7-2), 6-3. **Quarter-finals** P-H Herbert (Fr) and N Mahut (Fr) bt R Galloway (US) and A Olivetti (Fr) 7-5, 6-4; (3) R Ram (US) and J Salisbury (GB) bt (5) M González (Arg) and A Molteni (Arg) 6-4, 6-3; (2) I Dodig (Cro) and A Krajicek (US) bt (9) H Nys (Monaco) and J Zielinski (Pol) 6-4, 2-6, 6-3. **Women: Singles: Fourth round** (2) A Sabalenka (Bela) bt (13) D Kasatkina (Russ) 6-1, 6-3; (23) Zheng Qinwen (China) bt (5) O Jabeur (Tun) 6-2, 6-4. **Quarter-final** (6) C Gauff (US) bt (20) J Ostapenko (Lat) 6-0, 6-2. **Doubles: Quarter-finals** J Brady (US) and L Stefani (Br) bt M Linette (Pol) and B Pera (US) 7-6 (7-1), 3-6, 6-3; (16) G Dabrowski (Can) and E Routliffe (NZ) bt (6) L Fernandez (Can) and T Townsend (US) 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (10-8). **Mixed doubles: Quarter-final** (5) E Shibahara (Japan) and M Pavic (Cro) bt (1) B Strycova (Cz) and S González (Mex) 6-4, 7-6 (8-6).

Fixtures

Cricket

LV= Insurance County Championship: Division One: Third day of four (10.30; 96 overs minimum): **Chelmsford** Essex v Middlesex. **Final day of four** (10.30; 80 overs minimum): **Ageas Bowl** Hampshire v Somerset. **Northampton** Northamptonshire v Lancashire. **Division Two: Final day of four** (10.30; 80 overs minimum): **Chester-le-Street** Durham v Sussex. **Scarborough** Yorkshire v Derbyshire.

Cycling

Tour of Britain fourth stage (Sherwood Forest to Newark-on-Trent).

Football

Vanarama National South Havant & Waterlooville v Eastbourne Borough (7.45).

MARTIN RICKETT/PA


Nketiah, right, warms up for England's games against Ukraine and Scotland, in which he hopes to win his first senior cap

'Chelsea felt I was too short – it's made me more resilient'

Memory of rejection is still motivating Arsenal striker Eddie Nketiah, he tells **Henry Winter**



Eddie Nketiah has always been known as a poacher, turning in crosses or playing off the shoulder of the last defender and sprinting through on goal. Now he seeks to meet Mikel Arteta's demands to become a more rounded centre forward for Arsenal, holding the ball up and also linking play as well as scoring.

Prolific in the Arsenal youth teams, and still holding the England Under-21 goalscoring record (16 in 17 games), Nketiah is now 24 and the time to shine is surely now. He's played under Arsène Wenger, Unai Emery and now Arteta, and knows he has to contribute more than goals if he is to keep his starting place with Gabriel Jesus returning from knee injury. His first England call-up has now come with his more all-round play for Arsenal.

Speaking after training at St George's Park yesterday, Nketiah emphasised that he has benefited from starting more regularly for Arsenal, three of the five games so far this season. "I've always had more to my game than just goals," Nketiah said. "When you score goals, it's a really important role, but with the consistency and the games I've been getting, I've been allowed to showcase more sides to my game.

"What helps is the fact I have had opportunities from the start that allows you to build that rhythm and that confidence. Hopefully I can stay in the team and keep contributing to the team.

"Working under a manager like Mikel tactically makes you so much better, you understand your role as a striker so much more than what you have to do around the box."

Nketiah watches and learns from Jesus — "a fantastic player, it's nice to be competing with someone of that standard" — just as he does with Harry Kane — "a world-class striker" — at St George's Park.

He takes inspiration and guidance from another celebrated attacker, Thierry Henry, even taking the No 14 shirt at Arsenal.

"Thierry's been magnificent for me," Nketiah said. "I was able to be coached by him as a first-year scholar at 16 [at Arsenal], it was amazing, one of my best and most enjoyable seasons, being able to bounce ideas off him.

"He came in and saw the quality I had and said that I just needed to believe in myself whatever anyone else said. That is what's going to drive you, to motivate you. That's probably one of the best pieces of advice I've ever received. I think he knows what he's talking about, so it's not a bad feeling! Still to this day when I see him he's still supportive and still really helpful.

"Fourteen has always been a number I've liked. Obviously Thierry wearing it has made it a lot more special. I know what that number means to Arsenal fans and so I try to go out and give it my all on the pitch.

"When the number was available and offered to me, it was something I embraced. I'm not here to try and recreate Thierry's moments. I'm here to put my own stamp on it and create my own special memories in the shirt."

It was Nketiah's poaching prowess, particularly in a tournament for Hillyfielders, his Sunday team near Catford in southeast London, that had Chelsea pursuing him aged nine. He was released by Chelsea who felt he wasn't tall enough. "At a young age, I had to deal with a big setback, it makes you resilient," he said. "I know what it feels to be at the bottom and be out and I don't want to be back there. We all have talent but what separates you is your mentality and how much I want it.

"It came as a shock to me because I was doing well at the time. It gives you an awakening and just knowing that things can change like that — that you can lose everything you have worked for. It gives you that extra bit of motivation and resilience when times are hard. I'm able to dig a level deeper than maybe some people can or don't want to go into."

He reflects on the sacrifices he and his family made. "It's a long list. My dad would drive me to every game, home and away, tours as a kid, he would book a flight, come, watch and support. Mum would stay up washing kit, sisters would finish school and come and pick me up to put me on a train all the way to Cobham or Hale End. Also when you get released, them being there and supporting me, and knowing it's not the end of the world.

"I've always believed that I can make it and play here [Arsenal]. There's always been transfer talk and speculation, but I'm happy that I've taken this route and I'm proud to be part of Arsenal. It feels like home to me.

"Throughout my career there have been a lot of changes in management, which is unusual for Arsenal because they had always had one manager. I think I played under three different managers and as a young player that makes it hard to gauge where you are. You have to prove yourself each year. It's been good to have Mikel here for a few years and I've been able to establish myself and move up through the ranks. I'm in a good place."

Linking and finishing.

Ukraine v England
Stadion Wroclaw
Saturday, 5pm
TV: Live on Channel 4.
Radio: talkSPORT.

Spain appoint first woman coach after sacking Vilda

Martyn Ziegler Chief Sports Reporter

Spain's Women's World Cup-winning coach Jorge Vilda has been sacked and replaced by Montse Tomé, the first woman to manage the side, as the fallout from the Luis Rubiales scandal continues.

The new board of the Spanish football federation (RFEF), formed after its president Rubiales was provisionally suspended for kissing the player Jenni Hermoso, has agreed to terminate Vilda's contract. Vilda was a close ally of Rubiales and was seen applauding him when he refused to resign at a RFEF meeting, though he later tried to distance himself from the official.

Vilda had been under scrutiny since last September, when 15 players boycotted the national team, citing a toxic culture. Eleven of those eventually made themselves available for the World Cup after talks with the federation, but four continued their boycott.

The RFEF said in a statement: "The Royal Spanish Football Federation has decided to dispense with the services of Jorge Vilda as sports director and women's national coach. The RFEF appreciates his work, as well as the successes achieved during his time crowned with the recent achievement of the World Cup."

Tomé had been Vilda's assistant coach since 2018 and has since "established herself as a key player in the national team's growth", the RFEF said.

Vilda's dismissal comes as the RFEF dealt a severe blow to Rubiales's hopes of staying in football administration by apologising for the "enormous damage" caused by his actions. Rubiales has been suspended by Fifa for 90 days while it investigates his behaviour at last month's Women's World Cup final against England in Sydney. He kissed Hermoso on the lips in the medal ceremony, something the player has said she did not consent to.

Antony in United's European squad despite assault claims

Paul Hirst

Manchester United have included Antony in their Champions League squad even though he is the subject of police investigations in England and Brazil over claims that he assaulted his ex-girlfriend.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and São Paulo police are looking into claims that Antony assaulted the 23-year-old Brazilian DJ and influencer Gabriela Cavallin during their near two-year-long relationship. Antony said he "vehemently denies" the claims.

United have refused to comment since Cavallin submitted a complaint against Antony to GMP last Friday, and since she spoke in detail about the alleged behaviour of her former partner in an interview with Brazilian publication UOL on Monday.

United yesterday named Antony among their 25-strong Champions League squad for the group stages, which begin later this month. The Brazilian Football Confederation removed Antony from their squad after Cavallin went public with her claims that the 23-year-old winger punched and headbutted her and threw a glass at her. Some of the alleged assaults are said to have occurred in São Paulo and others in Manchester.

GMP said that "enquiries remain ongoing to establish the circumstances surrounding this report".

United suspended Mason Greenwood last year after he was accused of attempted rape, assault and coercion, although the case was not brought to court due to the withdrawal of witnesses and the emergence of new evidence. Greenwood denied the charges and was not found to be guilty by a club investigation, but United recently decided to loan him to Getafe.

Donny van de Beek, meanwhile, has been left out of United's squad as he is being targeted by Galatasaray.

United sale 'is still being worked on'

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Ineos emerging as favourites to complete a £5 billion takeover alongside a Qatari consortium led by Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani.

As recently as last night, sources close to the sales process insisted Raine, the New York bank commissioned by the Glazers to sell the club side, was still working to secure a deal.

At the same time, the two main bidders have not been informed that United is no longer available, and there was contact between the relevant parties last week. After ten months, there is no doubt that the main bidders are becoming exasperated by the delays.

In the case of the Ratcliffe proposal, a deal that has been focused principally on first acquiring the Glazers' 67 per cent stake ahead of a full takeover, there have been legal complications.

Own up, Jordan, you moved for money

Matt Dickinson

Senior Sports Writer



Before giving a tortuous interview that appears to have been based on a very optimistic belief that if he throws out enough words some may actually sound convincing, I wish Jordan Henderson had stood with me and a couple of other reporters chatting to a LIV golfer on the Wentworth practice range last year.

That British player was anguishing about all the guff he had parroted at press conferences about growing the game in the Middle East as his primary motivation which had, ultimately, made him look very foolish. And this golfer is no fool.

He is a pragmatist who took late-career riches — maximum wealth, minimal pressure — and ruefully wished he had simply acknowledged as much rather than trot out the PR nonsense. How soon does Henderson, no fool either, come to the same realisation? When he sees how many in the LGBTQ+ community he had hoped to pacify are vehemently wishing he had said nothing rather than this naive, confused justification of his move to Al-Ettifaq? When he looks around at a messy world, in all its compromises and little and big hypocrisies, and concludes that if he has made a decision for him and his family that they can happily live with, why does he need to pretend there is some other specious noble cause?

It is rarely wise to insult people's intelligence but that is how most will feel about being asked to believe that money was low on Henderson's agenda in moving to Saudi Arabia. The pay would be my first question. If I were going to turn down opportunities to play in Europe's top leagues, risk my England place, lend all the experience and status of winning a Premier League, Champions League and 77 caps to play, at 33, in an inferior competition in a country where I know I will be accused of all sorts of double standards, I would expect silly money, even if Henderson denies rumours of £700,000 per week.

A far-fetched claim that the project was what really excited him instantly sets off alarm bells that clang incessantly throughout his chat with The Athletic. And, because of LIV golf, it makes it worse that we have heard all this bunkum before.

From a PR perspective, Henderson knows he has a particular problem because he has previously supported LGBTQ+ campaigns, like rainbow laces. Never shy of a challenge, he wants to show that he has faced up to accusations of hypocrisy in moving to a country where being gay is criminalised.

Would he wear those laces in Saudi? "I wouldn't rule that out," Henderson says, before then effectively doing so by saying that he does not want to cause offence to his generous hosts.

"What I wouldn't do is disrespect the religion and culture in Saudi Arabia. If we're all saying everybody can be who they want to be and everybody is inclusive, then we'll have to respect that," he says.

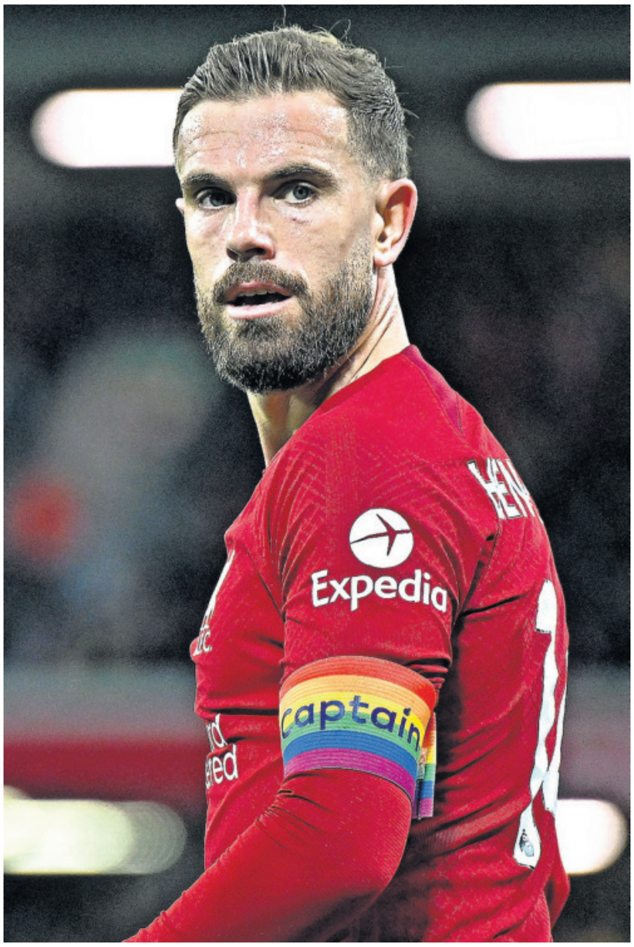
By this point, everyone is probably confused. Is he supporting tolerance of gay people or tolerance of putting them in prison? "We'll have to respect everyone. And by doing something like that [wearing laces], if that did disrespect the religion, then no, I'm not going to do that. But if the opportunity comes where I can do it and it doesn't, then yeah, because that's my values."

No one ever expected Henderson to settle all the thorny issues that lead politicians, diplomats, royalty, big business and perhaps all of us as consumers into a moral maze but I am really not sure this has helped any more than his message to any of the LGBTQ+ community he has upset. "I'm sorry they feel like that," Henderson says by means of an apology which is not really much of one at all.

Citing the Qatar World Cup only makes it worse. Henderson says Amnesty presented "shocking and horrendous" information to the England squad pre-tournament but the fears were unfounded. "You get to meet the workers there and it was totally different," he says. It seems not to have crossed his mind that the area where the worst labour camps were alleged to be was not exactly on England's itinerary in Doha.

Henderson has not helped himself but, then, flogging him for that may not help much either. It is not going to stop Saudi money driving many more compromises, especially in the world of sport.

Perhaps all we can hope for is more straightforwardness. Andy Murray has previously said that he would turn down money to play in the kingdom for exhibition games but he then acknowledged that it would be a different conversation if rankings were at stake. That is, he says, the "unfortunate" reality. I think most people get that, and where sport is heading. They just do not want to be taken for fools.



The LGBTQ+ community feel betrayed by Henderson's move to Saudi Arabia

Henderson: I left because I wasn't wanted at Liverpool

Charlotte Duncker

Jordan Henderson has defended his transfer to Saudi Arabia and apologised for upsetting the LGBTQ+ community.

The former Liverpool captain has spoken for the first time about his decision to leave England for Al-Ettifaq, insisting that it was motivated not by money but because he was no longer wanted at Anfield.

Henderson, who is back in England preparing for this weekend's Euro 2024 qualifier against Ukraine, said he was hurt by the widespread criticism and suggestions that he no longer cares about the LGBTQ+ community, a group he had been a vocal ally for during his 12 years at Liverpool.

Speaking in an interview with The Athletic, the 33-year-old insisted his values had not changed but said that he accepted why some people may feel angry. "I can understand the frustration. I can understand the anger. I get it. All I can say is that I'm sorry that they feel like that. My intention was never, ever to hurt anyone," Henderson said.

"When I was making the decision, the way that I tried to look at it was I felt as though, by myself not going, we can all bury our heads in the sand and criticise different cultures and different countries from afar. But then nothing's going to change."

The midfielder believes he can make a change by being in the country and that Al-Ettifaq were aware of his values before signing him. However, he also said that he would respect the rules of the country before putting on rainbow laces again, having been involved in that campaign while at Liverpool.

Henderson said he returned to Liverpool for pre-season expecting to be a key part of the side, but that changed after conversations with the manager, Jürgen Klopp. "There were a few things that sent alarm bells ringing," he said. "At no point did I feel wanted by the club or anyone to stay."



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Sport



ROBIN JONES/GETTY IMAGES

Monetising the allegiances of pundits like Keane, above, risks jeopardising their safety at matches

Martin Samuel

Keane incident a result of fad for pundits as fans

The voice of sport



Jimmy Hill was the chairman of Coventry City, chairman of Charlton Athletic and chairman of Fulham. He is credited with writing the words to the song *Good Old Arsenal*, and was the president of Corinthian Casuals.

Never needed a bouncer to get him in and out of football matches, though. Never needed much security. Not that he was always popular. Sir Alex Ferguson, in particular, thought that Hill had it in for Manchester United; Sunderland fans hated him for delaying the kick-off for Coventry versus Bristol City on the final day of the 1976-77 season. Both teams played out the last ten minutes of that game knowing a point each was enough to stay up, because Sunderland were being relegated having lost 2-0 in a match that had already finished.

Yet Hill was an equal-opportunity offender. You may think he was harsh on your team, but your rivals felt he was equally harsh on theirs. He had his flaws and his blind spots and wisdom left him later in life, but Hill's most obvious allegiance was to football, not to one team. And his employers, in those days, went out of their way to make sure that was apparent, whoever was in the studio.

We must hope, then, that a small pang of guilt is now felt in Isleworth at the suggestion that Sky's analysts may have to travel with bodyguards when they are at football grounds after an alleged incident involving Roy Keane and an Arsenal fan at the Emirates. Keane is said to have been the victim of an alleged assault, a poorly aimed headbutt, with his assailant now bailed.

A court will, in all likelihood, apportion blame and pass sentence if necessary. If there was violence it is inexcusable. Yet if Keane, and his colleagues, now require a security detail to go about their business, they have every right to ask their employers: why? How have they been set on a path where they are perceived, not as the valued, informed commentators that they undoubtedly are, but as fans of one side or the other?

This has been simmering for some while. A supporter would not be allowed in the home end at the Emirates in a Manchester United shirt — or an Arsenal shirt permitted in the Stretford End — yet Keane and his cohorts are metaphorically costumed that way when they sit in the studio. During the Women's World Cup, pundits on both channels were ever more literal in their support — actually wearing England shirts on the job. What happened to impartiality? What happened to a seat on the fence? It is not uncommon these days for one side to be referred to as "we" or "us". And then there is shock at friction within the stadium.

The studio is a glorified press box, that's all. Some of the inhabitants may not want to hear this because they don't like the press and consider themselves above it but their passes are media passes just the same. And a football shirt would not be allowed in the press box; nor would celebrations. You often find them abroad. Fanboys in the foreign press section at Real Madrid used to wave imaginary cards if anyone so much as grazed Cristiano Ronaldo. Napoli's media area is full of supposed journalists in colours, but without notebooks or laptops, who explode like ultras when their team scores. It isn't like that here. Obviously, the majority of football writers grew up supporting a team. Yet the job requires that allegiance to be left at the door, on collecting the ticket. And that is true of broadcasters, too. It is not the pundits who constantly remind the audience where their heart lies. The producers now do that — showing goal celebrations, agonies, ecstasies. The former West Ham United manager Slaven Bilic was mortified when, at the 2016 European Championships, ITV broadcast footage of him climbing on a table in the studio to celebrate a goal by his player Dimitri Payet for France against Albania. Bilic's argument was that this was a private moment, and he wouldn't have done it had he known the camera was on him.

Ian Wright quit his television job in 2008, accusing the BBC of using him like "a comedy jester". Yet now he is back and his bosses mine his exuberant nature more than ever. And it looks good on social media. Gets hits. Makes these great figures appear no different to the humble fan. Yet some don't want fans in the press box. They certainly don't want a Manchester United fan in the West Stand at the Emirates. And Keane, for obvious reasons, is still as recognisable over there as if he were in full kit, calling out Patrick Vieira in the tunnel.

That will be the excuse. That Keane will always be a bogeyman at Arsenal and is never going to be anything but a target there. Yet he's always been a Manchester United icon and he hasn't needed protection before. All of those guys in the studio: Jamie Carragher, Gary Neville, Micah Richards, Alan Shearer, Wright, Gary Lineker — we all know who they want to win.

Yet it is interesting that this confrontation only happened on entering an age when old acquaintances are not so much forgotten, as highlighted and monetised. And, really, a fan should be able to cheer on his team from wherever he likes in the ground. What a small-minded generation it is that cannot accept that a football lover can support any one of a thousand clubs.

Yet we know this isn't the case now. If you can't make it next Saturday, you can no longer gift your season ticket to your friend who is a fan of the opposition, because he'll be thumped, or ejected, and you'll be banned. All for just supporting a team. Yet that's the way it is. So playing up fan status and then leaving a famous individual to walk through the crowd — the only surprise is this hasn't happened sooner.

England's awfully perfect preparation?

There is a superstition in horse racing about the best turned-out runner. Don't back it. Whatever looks sharpest in the paddock, whatever gets the rosette for the most immaculately groomed, is to be avoided.

There are no great statistical studies here, no established correlations, but anyone who goes racing has a friend who is instinctively wary of a handsome horse. In football, a good pre-season carries similar foreboding. The team that impresses before the competition begins is invariably doomed to failure. Of the past ten winners of the Community Shield, only one has gone on to take the title.

So utilising these two irrefutable pieces of sporting logic, can there be any doubt that England are going to win the Rugby World Cup? Let's face it, preparations could not have gone worse. Injuries, suspensions, the first defeat to a "Tier Two" side. Short of arriving in Le Touquet to find the hotel double booked and the travel agent's credit card maxed out, it is hard to imagine what further disaster could have befallen Steve Borthwick's squad. So it's on a plate.

England have the most straightforward pool and a likely meeting with their fellow strugglers Wales or Australia before the semi-finals. On the other side of the draw South Africa, New Zealand, Ireland and France will be contesting two places. Everything about England's journey to here suggests abject failure. What could possibly go wrong?



Borthwick has had a dismal World Cup build-up

United have no excuse for silence

On January 30, 2022, when Manchester United awoke to accusations against Mason Greenwood, complete with audio and photographic footage, there really was no playbook for an event of this kind. There have been serious accusations against footballers in the past, of course, but none that have entered the public domain so graphically. Manchester United's suspension of Greenwood preceded his arrest on suspicion of attempted rape and assault, and the club was initially praised for its decisive action.

So, as dismal as it may sound, there is now a procedure for such instances. United do have a process for when a player is accused of violence. So why the silence around Antony? He has been accused of assaulting his former girlfriend Gabriela Cavallin on several occasions, with Greater Manchester Police and São Paulo Civil Police now investigating. Cavallin claims she received treatment from a doctor at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Manchester after one attack. Antony denies the allegations, as Greenwood did. Yet, in Greenwood's case, that did not stop United deciding he had no future at Old Trafford and structuring a loan move to Getafe in Spain. On Antony, though, they have said nothing — even though Cavallin's initial reports of threats, violence and bodily injury date back to June.

Many have been critical of what they perceive as inertia and indecision from United around Greenwood but it was a complicated case — with much of its complexity still protected by law — and mistakes were made. It does mean, however, that precedents have been set and maps drawn across the terrain. A playbook exists. What has happened to it? Brazil have withdrawn Antony from their international squad for matches against Bolivia and Peru this month. The longer United remain frozen, the more it will be presumed the club is making up its responses as it goes along. And there is no excuse for that now.

BLONDET ELIOT/ABACA/SHUTTERSTOCK








CHALUREAU SE DEFEND
Les Bleus, services non compris
L'EQUIPE
MBAPPÉ
LA RENTRÉE DE LA CLASSE

Clockwise from left: Dupont and the squad are greeted by the crowd; the Arc de Triomphe lit up; our writer with No Scrum No Win's Callanan, left, and Pillot, right; a recent cover of L'Equipe

Even Paris is embracing World Cup

It's no longer just southern heartlands beating the rugby drum, as **Alex Lowe** hears in a Parisian pub

It tends to be easier to take the pulse of French rugby in the heartland of the south than in the vast metropolis of Paris, where football dominates and fans of the oval-ball game are traditionally fickle. But not here on the stylish Rue Godot de Mauroy, in the capital's ninth arrondissement. Not here, sipping a beer at the bar of No Scrum No Win, a rugby pub where the unfashionable become fashionable.

The eight owners (of course there are eight) all have connections to Clamart Rugby 92, a club to the southeast of Paris founded in 1963 by Guy Boniface, the former France centre. Their red and white hooped jerseys are described evocatively as "blood and snow". Among the pack of business partners is Mathieu de Giovanni, the Stade Français lock whose father, Jocelyn, played for Clamart.

I am sitting at the bar with David Callanan, a native of Cork who joined Clamart when he moved to Paris 25 years ago. He trademarked the phrase "No Scrum No Win" after hearing it on a piece of Five Nations commentary and then spent years wondering what to do with it. "It's funny, people in England always say it's a French phrase and people in France say it's English," Callanan says.

At first he began a clothing range and then joined forces with some Clamart team-mates to launch the pub in 2018. Gurtho Steenkamp, the former South Africa prop who is now forwards coach of La Rochelle, has enjoyed a few big nights at the bar, which replaced an Irish pub and is decked out like a rugby changing room (minus the smell of Deep Heat).

Wyatt Crockett, the prop, once invited Callanan to the New Zealand team hotel when they were in Paris for a Test match. He wanted to buy No Scrum No Win T-shirts and hoodies for the All Blacks forwards and a stack to take home for the Crusaders.

Only this week, the owners took delivery of an England jersey donated by Ellis Genge via Paul Gustard, the defence coach of Stade Français, which will go into the newest branch on Rue des Canettes or Rue des Soiffeur, as it is known.

Front-row forwards are not the kind to seek the spotlight (Joe Marler aside) but they clearly appreciate recognition for those who spend weekends with their heads buried in a scrum or maul.

"I think it was Wyatt Crockett who said, 'You guys put the limelight on the guys who are never in the limelight. We are modest guys, we are not seeking it. But it is nice to get some recognition'," Callanan says. "Any forward you talk to, at Racing 92 or Stade Français, will tell you the same thing."

So where better than No Scrum No Win to try to gauge the levels of rugby fever in Paris three days before the curtain rises on the World Cup and France tackle the All Blacks on a hotly anticipated opening night? There was a sense of calm before the storm in the city on Tuesday. Even *L'Equipe*, the national sports newspaper, had not quite ticked over into rugby mode. The France No 10 pictured on its front page was Kylian Mbappé, the Paris Saint-Germain striker, rather than Matthieu Jalibert.

But that is about to change. Today it will start to feel real, with the first major set-piece event of the tournament. France and New Zealand will announce their teams for the opening game and there is intrigue attached to both. Jonathan Danty, the French midfield colossus who was raised in the banlieues of Paris, had been ruled out of the game with a hamstring injury but it now appears he may be fit. New Zealand, meanwhile, are sweating over the fitness of Jordie Barrett.

Anticipation for the World Cup in all rugby communities of France is enormous. The benefits are already being felt. The sport is vibrant and it is cool. Antoine Dupont is modelling for *GQ* and appearing on television shows usually closed to rugby players. Callanan still turns out for Clamart, along with Jean Marie Pillot, who works behind the bar at No Scrum No Win, and participation at the club is already up. Community rugby in France is bracing itself for an influx of new players, with the French Rugby Federation (FFR) hoping for a 20 per cent spike in new or returning players.

France v New Zealand
Stade de France, Paris
Friday, 8.15pm
TV: ITV1, from 6.45pm

"This France team with their young and exciting players has really captured the imagination of the public," Callanan says. "You can feel it in our dressing room after training. You can hear people talking about it at our club on a Wednesday night. There is a pride with it. And a confidence. Rugby in France has become very popular and it has accelerated over the last few years."

That is largely down to the professional game bridging the divide between club and country, so the whole sport is aligned towards the ultimate goal of France winning the World Cup on home soil.

It is a landscape Dan Carter barely recognises. The former New Zealand fly half spent three years at Racing 92 towards the end of his career. "I loved playing here because there was so much history with the clubs and the passion those fans have for their team," Carter says. "I couldn't believe how much talent there was and I would always be confused about why that wouldn't transcend into the national team.

"It has grown and evolved over time. Their junior rugby is strong, the women's team are a world-leading team and a lot of good things are happening in French rugby."

Carter will be at the game on Friday night. Callanan will not. He has decided to stay in the pub, enjoy the atmosphere and ring the bell when France score. He backs Les Bleus to win the World Cup for the first time but there is also one man from back home he will be rooting for: Jack Crowley, the Munster and Ireland fly half.

"I played football with his dad back in my village," Callanan says. "I was back home watching the warm-up game between Ireland and England in a pub. He came on and everywhere went crazy. It's really nice to have that connection. I will be rooting for him."

Maybe it was my imagination but Callanan seemed to lower his voice when talking about Crowley. It's probably not the done thing to talk up the backs in a pub built for forwards.

Vermeulen: We must keep Russell quiet or we're in danger

Mark Palmer Toulon

Duane Vermeulen, the South Africa back-row forward, believes that Finn Russell is a "magician" who holds the keys to Sunday's blockbuster clash between the Springboks and Scotland.

Vermeulen, who was man of the match in the 2019 final and is in the 2023 squad, is a big admirer of the Scotland fly half and believes the world champions must neuter his threat at the Stade Vélodrome in Marseille.

"Oh jeez, he is a magician with ball in hand," Vermeulen, 37, said. "On the front foot, he's really good and he's got a massive playbook in his head and is just a fantastic individual player. We really have to sit down and have our video sessions and have a look at what he does on the field.

"Some teams always stick to things that make them strong and we know Scotland love to play on quick ball, and Finn Russell is the kingpin in that position. If he can get front-foot ball, Scotland will be dangerous."

Deon Davids, one of the South Africa assistant coaches, spoke warmly of his time coaching the Junior Springboks with Pieter de Villiers, the South African-born former France prop who now oversees the Scotland scrum. Davids also coached two Scotland front-rowers, Pierre Schoeman and WP Nel, the latter in his formative days with the Boland Cavaliers in the Western Cape.

"I'm glad that it worked out for him," Davids said. "For him to still be part of the team [aged 37], still be competing in this competition, it's proof of his ability."

On the Scotland team, Davids added: "If you look at the players in their squad, where they play and how they play, whatever they do, with ball in hand or without, they will always pose a threat. It's all about how we ensure that we handle the pressure."

South Africa have lost their first match at each of the past two World Cups, to Japan in 2015 and to New Zealand in 2019. While there has been talk of the Springboks coaches framing the Scotland game as a "World Cup final", Vermeulen, who played in both those tournaments, insisted the team were not driven by a need to make amends. "I think from our 2015 squad there are six or seven guys who are here and still playing. Everything has evolved since then. The game has become a lot different, the coaching style, the referees, the laws — everything has changed," he said. "We haven't really talked about it [the two opening-match defeats].

"You mention it now and it pops in my head. But we haven't really touched on it and I don't think it's a big thing for the coaches to focus on."

S Africa v Scotland Sunday, 4.45pm. **TV** ITV.

‘I got angry with Steve after



Will Kelleher
Deputy Rugby Correspondent, Le Touquet

Jonny May is by no means one of England’s most aggressive or confrontational players, but he lost his temper with Steve Borthwick last month.

It was the Monday before England played Wales in Cardiff, their only warm-up match before the World Cup squad was announced. Not only did Borthwick, the head coach, tell May that he was not playing, but he was not in the final 33 either.

“That got my monkey out, I’ll be honest,” May says, referring to what psychologists call an athlete’s “chimp” — their irate and irrational selves. I was like, ‘I’m not going and I’m not playing at the weekend, so why the hell am I here?’

“I really wanted to get a game, and if I had got a game and then I had been told I wouldn’t be going, I could have handled it a lot better. I went to the gym for ten minutes and then stomped back to him [Borthwick] and said I need another chat. I said, ‘I’m running this by you because maybe I don’t want to be here this week. Why am I here? I’ve got my son at home.’ ”

Jaxon, May and his wife Sophie’s first child, was two months old. May was angry that he had missed time watching his son grow up to go to England training, only to find out it was for nothing.

“I was disappointed because I expressed in week one I wanted a game and an opportunity to play,” May, 33, says. “I wasn’t going to get that and I felt like I’d worked hard and played well and trained well. I really wanted it. There’s no right or wrong way to tell somebody they’re not in the team and I understand that from Steve’s part. I didn’t scream and shout at him. I reacted angrily, but rationally.”

By the time May had calmed down and returned to Borthwick for their fifth one-on-one chat of the summer, the head coach convinced him to stay in camp and train. He appreciated the opportunity to talk candidly.



May will look to add to his 36 England tries at the World Cup

Most-capped in England squad

Player	Caps
Ben Youngs	124 caps
Owen Farrell	107
Dan Cole	102
Courtney Lawes	100
Danny Care	90
George Ford	85
Joe Marler	82
Jamie George	79
Jonny May	73
Maro Itoje	70
Billy Vunipola	70

“Maybe if I was 20 years old I wouldn’t be in a position to go in and challenge a coach as honestly as I did,” he says.

Borthwick wanted cover in case of injuries and suspensions, and May ended up benefiting from a calf injury to Anthony Watson, so is now out in France.

“Steve said he didn’t want me to go home because I am next in [line] and it doesn’t look good if you quit now, and then have to be called back in,” May says. “I’m glad I stayed. I looked at the bigger picture — I’ve done eight weeks away from home, what’s the harm in three more, trying to get a game and hang on in there.

“Obviously I’m gutted for Anthony — it’s a cruel game at times, you learn that as you get older. Cruel in two ways: you can not get picked and you can get hurt.”

Even after Watson’s injury, which ruled him out of the World Cup, it took a week to confirm that May would replace him. May started in the final warm-up Test against Fiji, playing for his place, and scored his 36th Test try within eight minutes, beating his opposite number, Selestino Ravutaumada. May was then in the squad, despite Ravutaumada later returning the favour as Fiji beat England 30-22 at Twickenham.

From starting outside the squad, the Gloucester wing looks primed to play against Argentina in the World Cup opener in Marseille. It is not unlike May to produce a rapid turnaround — although the late call-up has created difficulties for him and his family, who are looking for tickets to the games and a place to stay in Marseille.

Whether the Mays will be there to support Jonny on Saturday at the Stade Vélodrome, thousands of English fans will be. The form of the national team — who have won three times in nine Tests under Borthwick this year — has turned many away, though.

England’s players understand that. “I remember watching the England team and I was desperate for them to do well,” May says. “You watch them play and then you go and play minis on a Sunday and you’re feeling better about rugby if they win. Of course we’re gutted to be letting people down and we’re aware of that. All we’re doing is our absolute best. You won’t find a harder-working bloke than Steve. We completely understand frustration and disappointment and we share that. I’m gutted about it but the nasty stuff is the stuff I struggle to understand.”

By that May means the comments he heard and saw about his captain, Owen Farrell, after his ban for a dangerous tackle. He says he does not read it all, but it filters through, and several in the England camp are fuelled by it.

“I think Richard Wigglesworth relishes it,” he says of England’s attack coach. “I’m the other way. But of course I can sense it. I found the Faz stuff upsetting. You see it with politicians when they’re doing something a little bit slimy. You think, ‘Well, fair enough, people have got a right to go after these people when somebody’s not doing something right,’ but all we’re trying to do here is do our very best.

“We’re not doing anything particularly wrong but you get that sort of negative attention and you think, ‘Wow, that’s happening in rugby now.’ You can feel the vultures circling, if you like. I think it’s actually made us tighter.”

It is all so different to the 2019 World Cup, when England’s players knew what the first XV would be and stormed through the tournament under Eddie Jones. May, though, is still confident it will be all right this Saturday.

“I even wrote in my little notebook that it’s a new chapter now, and turned over a nice clean page,” he said. “People have written us off, the expectation’s low. That’s quite refreshing. We’re definitely underdogs. We’re still finding our way, we’re still finding our team, we’re still discovering ourselves. If we get the performance we want and perform how we can we won’t think we’re that brilliant all of a sudden, but outside noise will realise quite quickly we’re not as bad as people are saying we are.”



Our writers select their teams to face Argentina — and give their justification

Will Kelleher

1 Genge, 2 George, 3 Stuart, 4 Lawes, 5 Chessum, 6 Ludlam, 8 Earl, 7 Curry, 9 Care, 10 Ford, 12 Tuilagi, 13 Marchant, 11 Daly, 15 Smith, 14 May

Why not go for it, with Marcus Smith wearing No 15? Dropping Maro Itoje would be a big call but he has not performed to his high standards for a long time, so leaving him out and putting the hungry Ollie Chessum together with captain Courtney Lawes would be no bad thing

Owen Slot

1 Genge, 2 George, 3 Sinckler, 4 Itoje, 5 Chessum, 6 Lawes, 8 Ludlam, 7 Curry, 9 Mitchell, 10 Ford, 12 Lawrence, 13 Tuilagi, 11 Arundell, 15 Malins, 14 Daly

This is no time to drop the tried-and-tested forces of old; it is time for the Itojes and the Genges to rise up again. But England need triggers; that’s why I like Lewis Ludlam at No8 for his passion and spirit. They need some wit as well, thus Max Malins for the out-of-form Freddie Steward

Alex Lowe

1 Genge, 2 George, 3 Stuart, 4 Itoje, 5 Chessum, 6 Lawes, 8 Curry, 7 Earl, 9 Care, 10 Ford, 12 Tuilagi, 13 Lawrence, 11 Daly, 15 Steward, 14 Marchant

England insist Tom Curry is fit so he comes in at No8, allowing England to compete really hard on the floor. Manu Tuilagi and Ollie Lawrence isn’t my ideal midfield partnership but England need carriers and I like the idea of Joe Marchant and Elliot Daly cutting lines off them

‘Curry does a lot of things other players just can’t do’

CONTINUED FROM BACK

start. Curry’s most recent match was in the Gallagher Premiership final, on May 27, for Sale Sharks against Saracens. He then injured his ankle in England training at the start of August, which meant that he missed all of the warm-up Tests.

Curry has not played since Steve Borthwick took over from Eddie Jones as the England head coach in January, having suffered two hamstring injuries — one in each leg — that meant he missed the Six Nations.

In that time, England have lost six of nine Tests and conceded just over three tries per game on average. Sinfield, who said he is “accountable” and “responsible” for those defensive frailties, believes Curry can help solve them.

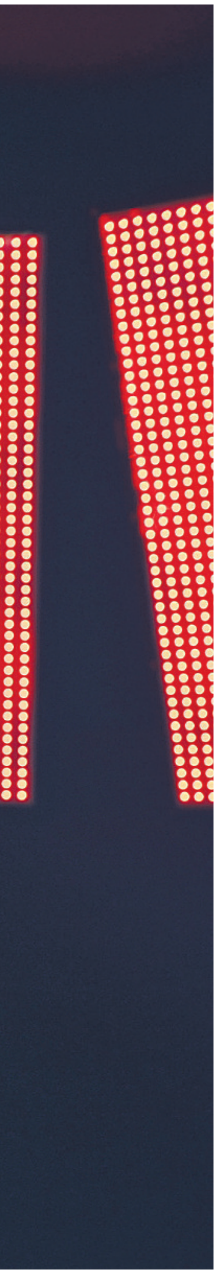
“He is ready,” Sinfield said. “It really helps having Tom back. He speaks very well, he tidies a lot of things up, he is an incredible athlete and he does things a lot of other players can’t do.”

Sinfield believes that Curry’s return has meant the others have had to lift their game, fearing being dropped.

“What it does and why we have seen a little lift in intensity this week would be around competition for places,” he said. “You suddenly throw Tom back out there and he is in the mix and there are a couple of back rows looking over their shoulder and understanding they have got to raise their game.

“Throughout my experience of being a player, the best teams I was involved in was when there were some wonderful names getting left out of a team. It shows the strength of your squad.”

World Cup snub'



DAN MULLAN/GETTY IMAGES; TOM DULAT/GETTY IMAGES



All those things which falls under the cognizance of man might very likely be mutually related in the same fashion and there can be nothing so remote that those things which falls under the cognizance



England v Argentina
Pool stage
Marseille, Stade Vélodrome
Saturday, 8pm
TV: ITV

Gatland: We can exhaust Fiji in heat

Elgan Alderman Versailles

Warren Gatland believes Wales can defeat Fiji through exhaustion this weekend after a summer of training that has taken them to dark, hot places.

Temperatures at the team's base camp in Versailles have been above 30C this week and are expected to remain in the high 20s at 9pm local time on Sunday in Bordeaux, where Wales begin their World Cup campaign.

During their summer preparations Wales went to Switzerland, training at low altitude and staying 1km higher up, in the July heat. The official warm-weather camp followed in Turkey, with temperatures of 40C recorded.

"If we go to a dark place from a conditioning point of view, then hopefully there are no darker places," Gatland said. "We've worked incredibly hard as a group. They've got some big physical players in their forward pack. There's no doubt we want to move them around as much as we possibly could. There's different ways of doing that, whether ball in hand or using a kicking strategy.

"[Fiji have] had five warm-up games so they're definitely rugby fit, it's how much conditioning they've done in those five weeks. It's not always easy to get your conditioning in when you're preparing for games. We've been focusing on that as a group. We worked amazingly hard at the Vale. The boys have been to a few dark places in Turkey and Switzerland. Hopefully that builds some resilience and mental toughness that we're going to require."

The weather has raised the prospect of water breaks during games. Gatland hopes they are not implemented. "We would like the ball on the park as often as we could," he said. "We think we're in pretty good shape physically. In terms of that, we're not going to push back on water breaks if that's what's decided."

Wales are training at Stade de Porchefontaine on a pitch hidden by trees. Co-captain Dewi Lake sweated profusely after training but he is now accustomed to the heat, even if such a late Sunday kick-off is novel. "Bridgend Sports didn't play at 9pm," he said.

Lake was at risk of missing the tournament due to injury but the hooker, who was wearing a knee brace in training, is available. All 33 players took part in training. Gatland is looking forward to there being "disappointed players" when he selects a full-strength XV.

Taulupe Faletau did not feature in the warm-up games because of a calf injury but he is in contention to face Fiji, with Gatland having no qualms about picking the 100-cap No 8. "There's no doubt in the first week he was blowing pretty hard," he said. "That's taken a bit of time but we've kept a close eye on his GPS figures and they've been excellent."

Kick-off 8pm Sunday **TV** ITV1.

From measuring Lawes's bed to checking saunas

Charlotte Gibbons, England's operations manager since 2016, talks **Will Kelleher** through her varied role

If you think trying to win a World Cup is difficult, try organising getting your team to one in the first place. Luckily for England, amid the revolving doors of the past four years, one staff member at the RFU has remained: the operations manager Charlotte Gibbons. Quietly, she is the queen of the spreadsheets, the captain of organisation, the calm head and the players' confidante.

Out in France her bags are bulging. The players' passports — they are not trusted to keep their own — extra European adapters in case anyone has forgotten them, wedges to hold open hotel doors, birthday candles and ear plugs are all in it.

She does everything from calculating the hardness of the soil on pitches, with something called a Clegg reader, to testing floodlight strength and the warmth of saunas — "the players like it quite hot" — and measuring the length of beds to ensure that the 6ft 7in Courtney Lawes can fit in them.

Gibbons, 46, has been doing this for England's senior men's team since 2016, but started in the RFU offices in 2004, before moving into logistics for the pathway system. It was there she met a 15-year-old George Ford and a 16-year-old Owen Farrell, where she had to drive Joe Marler from Sussex to Twickenham to make sure he made training and picked up Billy Vunipola from detention at Harrow School.

"Billy was with us from 17 and had been in trouble," she says. "They were happy for him to come into camp with the under-18s, but as he was on a detention doing laundry, I had to drive down there and pick him up to make sure he made it to Loughborough."

And Marler? "When he was in the academy at Harlequins he lived away from his home town in Heathfield, and was in a place locally in Twickenham," she says. "I used to pick him up in the kit van and take him to camps. I've watched them grow from children to husbands, dads and international rugby players, which has been a privilege. Billy, Mako [Vunipola], Joe, George and Owen I've been with the longest and they would be my top five favourites.

"I think the world of the players, so it's easy to work hard for them. You see them at under-18s and it doesn't take a genius to work out that Owen and George have a long career ahead of them. To watch them grow up and achieve stuff is fantastic."



Gibbons, inset, is England's captain of organisation, a queen of spreadsheets

The process of making sure England arrived in Le Touquet as prepared as they could be — off the field — started three years ago. The first recce to France was in 2021, with England choosing Le Touquet, one of three options given to them, in 2022.

Gibbons has seen most things in her time, from a fire at the team hotel in Brighton, to turning up late on the bus for a World Cup final, so is well versed in crisis management. Like when England landed in a typhoon at the 2019 World Cup, and then had to sharply move out of the way of the next one — Hagibis — during the pool stages as their France match was cancelled. "It was stressful," she says.

"People ask you questions when you don't know what's happening. You want to give people certainty, and so it's reassuring people you've got a plan. You might not know what it is, but I've definitely got one."

Gibbons will be the one who knows where the best coffee shops are around the world, which kitman likes a tail-lift and which likes a ramp at the back of their truck, where the bus can park, and where the nearest launderette is, too. But she also organises the English Qualified Players' list for coaches, so they know who they can select. Her job is the major and the minor, rolled into one.

"There are lots of huge spreadsheets," she says. "I'll have a checklist — things like floodlight strength, changing-room standards, the size of the beds. In Japan we had to do bed extensions on some of them. The showers were the issue, as some of the boys were a little too tall.

"There are more obscure things, like testing sauna temperatures, or printing out labels and making sure we've ordered enough laundry bags to securing the big hotel contracts and sorting the whole schedule."

And packing up the van. Last week a lorry went from London to Le Touquet stuffed with all manner of things: exercise WattBikes, the catching net and ladder for hooker throwing, coffee machines, chess boards and table football, spikeball nets, speakers, a table tennis table and crash mats, whiteboards, televisions and printers for the office they set up everywhere they travel. Oh, and all that freight now needs to be registered with a carnet pass, because of Brexit. Remarkably, though, despite being at every England match for the past seven years, she does not really watch them. After handing in the teamsheets and watching the anthems — her favourite part: "I can look at them and go, 'Oh my God, here we go'" — she helps Jamie, the kitman, tidy the changing room for half-time, with the game on her iPad.

Afterwards, it is on to sorting media and commercial commitments, capping ceremonies and endless supplies of food and drink. It is a thankless task, but someone has to do it. For England it is Gibbons — the world-class member of their team.

Sport

Henderson words make it worse

We know he joined Saudi league for the money and he should just say so

Matt Dickinson, page 61



England will play Smith at full back

'Magician' will be used as impact sub, says coach

Will Kelleher
Deputy Rugby Correspondent
Le Touquet

Marcus Smith will be England's "magician" from his new substitute full-back role at the World Cup, with England hoping he can fire up their struggling attack late in games.

During his six-year career, the 24-year-old has never started a game of professional rugby wearing No15. However, in a last-minute tactical change, England have started using him as a replacement full back, to complement the fly half George Ford, while the captain Owen Farrell serves a ban.

England will continue that ploy against Argentina in their opening World Cup pool match on Saturday, with Freddie Steward starting at full back, but Smith primed to replace him in the second half.

Tom Curry, the 25-year-old flanker, is set to be thrown straight into the England starting team after three months out to bolster a defence that missed 27 tackles in the 30-22 World Cup warm-up defeat by Fiji two Saturdays ago. In attack, England want to give Smith more space, positioning him deeper than he would play at fly half, so he can exploit tired defences. Kevin Sinfield, the defence coach, said that he came up with the idea and explained how they want it to work.

"He embraced it straight away," Sinfield said. "It was a question that was posed to him. Have you ever played 15? His first answer was, 'No, but I would love to'. The response was music to our ears because you're looking for tactical variation in the players we select.

"You'll have all seen what a magician he is with the ball, [he can] step off both feet, [is] quick, [and] can beat the opposition for fun. So why not try to give him a bit more time and space than he would typically get at No10, try to get him a little bit wider?

"We have been working on it for some weeks now with him in training. He's been incredible at the back. So to have him in the team and available, to have the option of him either coming on at 10 or 15, has been really good for us. His combination with George, as well, and with Owen when he's been alongside him at 10-12, not 10-15, just gives us a different way of playing."

Sinfield does not regard the bold move as a gamble. "It is not like he has played at under-15s and we have just decided to give him a run-out," he said. "He has been training with some real quality, against Fred and alongside Owen and George and some centre pairings, which we have mixed and matched. He's been magnificent."

Danny Care, his Harlequins clubmate who is also set to be involved against Argentina, knows how dangerous Smith can be if he is given licence to attack. "The idea is to get him the ball in some space, and to do that we've got to run hard, and win some collisions and get some quick ball," Care said.

Meanwhile, Sinfield is delighted to have Curry back fit and ready to

Continued on page 64

FREY/TPN/GETTY IMAGES



Row tarnishes Gauff victory

Coco Gauff strolled into semi-finals of the US Open but her opponent, Jelena Ostapenko, said she had been misled over the timing of their match, page 56

United value drops £500m

Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent

The value of Manchester United plummeted yesterday by more than £500 million amid growing uncertainty over the future ownership of the club.

Seemingly prompted by recent claims that the Glazer family may take the club off the market, United's share price on the New York Stock Exchange at one stage dropped by 21 per cent on Tuesday. The shares closed down 18.2 per cent, valuing the business at \$3.2 billion (£2.55 billion). It was the biggest fall in the stock since it went public in August 2012. The previous biggest one-day drop was on March 11, 2022, when it fell nearly 14 per cent.

United have been for sale since last November, with Sir Jim Ratcliffe and

Continued on page 60

Brook's World Cup lifeline

Steve James

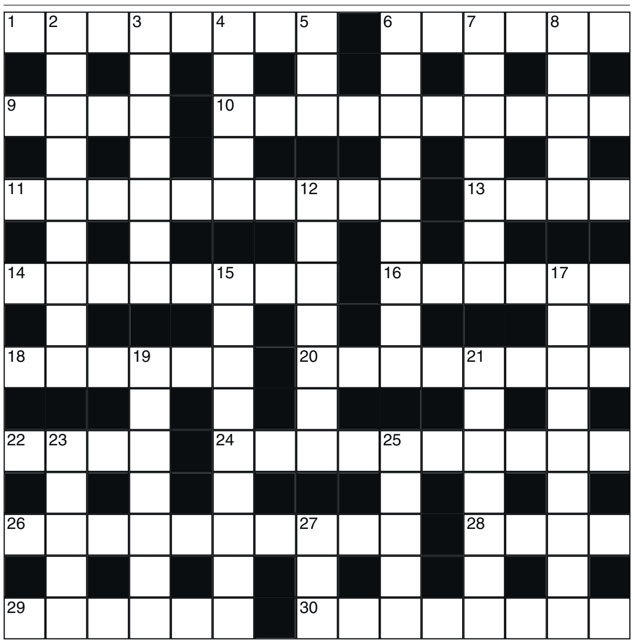
The England white-ball head coach has given the strongest indication yet that Harry Brook could yet be included in the squad for the World Cup in India next month.

Brook was originally omitted last month from the 15-man squad to widespread incredulity, given that he is considered one of the finest batsmen in all formats in the world. Brook failed for the second game in succession last night in Nottingham but since being dropped he has made a century for the Northern Superchargers in the Hundred, and scores of 43 not out and 67 in the first two matches of the T20 international series against New Zealand.

"I don't think anyone doubts Harry's ability," Matthew Mott, the England head coach, said in an interview on Sky Sports. "He's an incredible player. What I've been most impressed with is his

Continued on page 59

Times Crossword 28,701



ACROSS

1 Supply funds for vessel (8)
6 Genuine Polish saint (6)
9 Country united in reversal of basic principles (4)
10 Sometimes a lack of staff as a consequence? (3,3,4)
11 Piece of meat and celery, perhaps, feeding couple in the Far East? (10)
13 Lush part of rural Kyrgyzstan (4)
14 Cow eating cow, perhaps: roughly speaking, is its mate able to? (8)
16 Old swimmer lassoing a bovine (6)
18 Poetry in very old language succeeded (6)
20 Bar I dropped thrown out (8)
22 Wine having seen better days removed from case (4)
24 Measure has brought the enemy into focus (10)
26 Italian tide with Latino turned (10)
28 Head cut off in photograph, laugh (4)
29 Level of tale told to audience (6)
30 Squirrel away, turning up with nuts as diet (3,5)

DOWN

2 Bit mean, to make contact! (5,4)
3 One screw securing another, gripping device (7)
4 Wine kitty keeps at home (5)
5 Draw what informally comes up (3)
6 Farm employees not working easily (5,4)
7 49 per cent? 100 per cent! (3,4)
8 Spot Italian meat (5)
12 Approximately year lost by African slave on island (7)
15 Close to gagging when I cry, first of all (9)
17 Steel shackles put on, that's an obscenity! (9)
19 Item of footwear, one treading on banana skin? (7)
21 Witnesses inhaling the fumes (7)
23 Pick up coin, did you say? (5)
25 Tavern needs vermouth, don't you agree? (5)
27 Bonus clue (3)

Yesterday's solution 28,700



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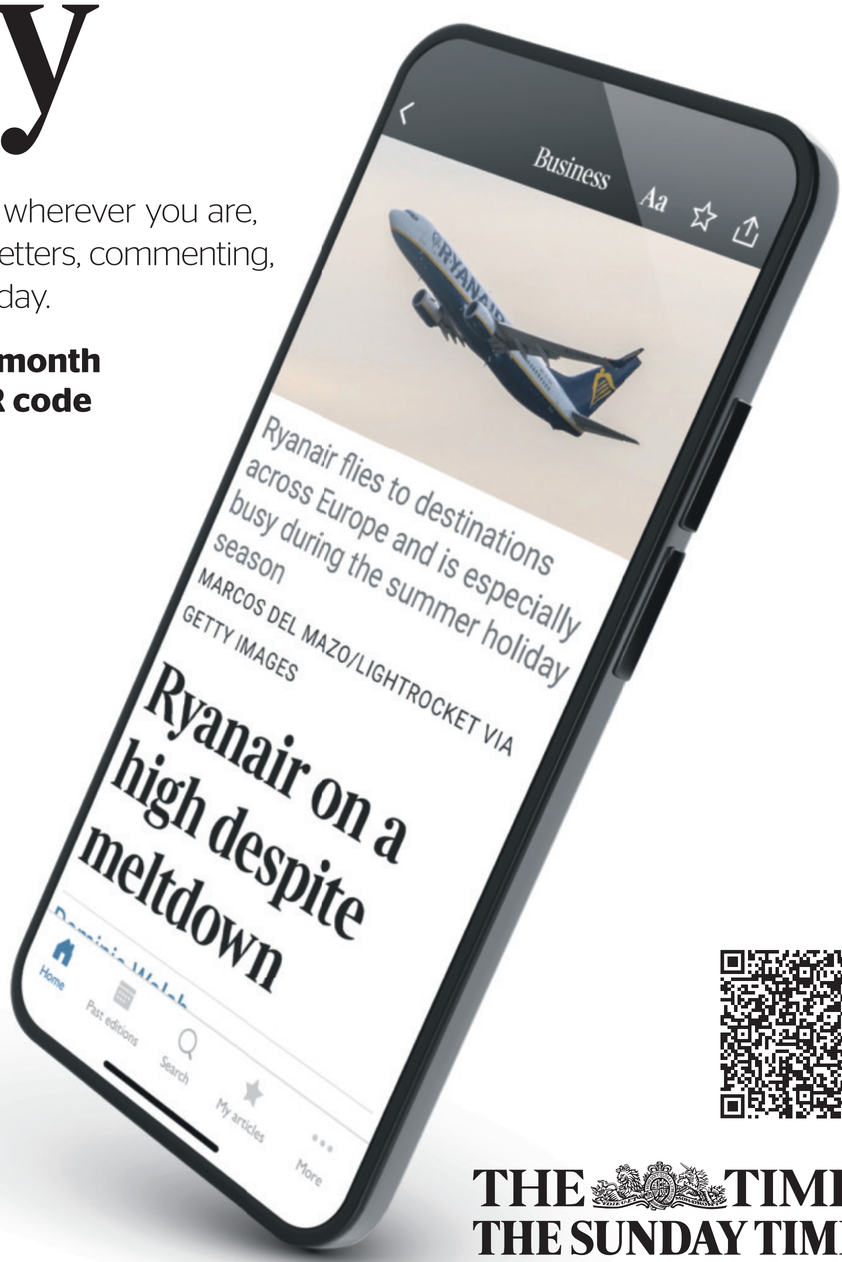
The Times Crossword Championship 2023 will be held on Saturday October 21. For further information see times-event.com/crossword-championship

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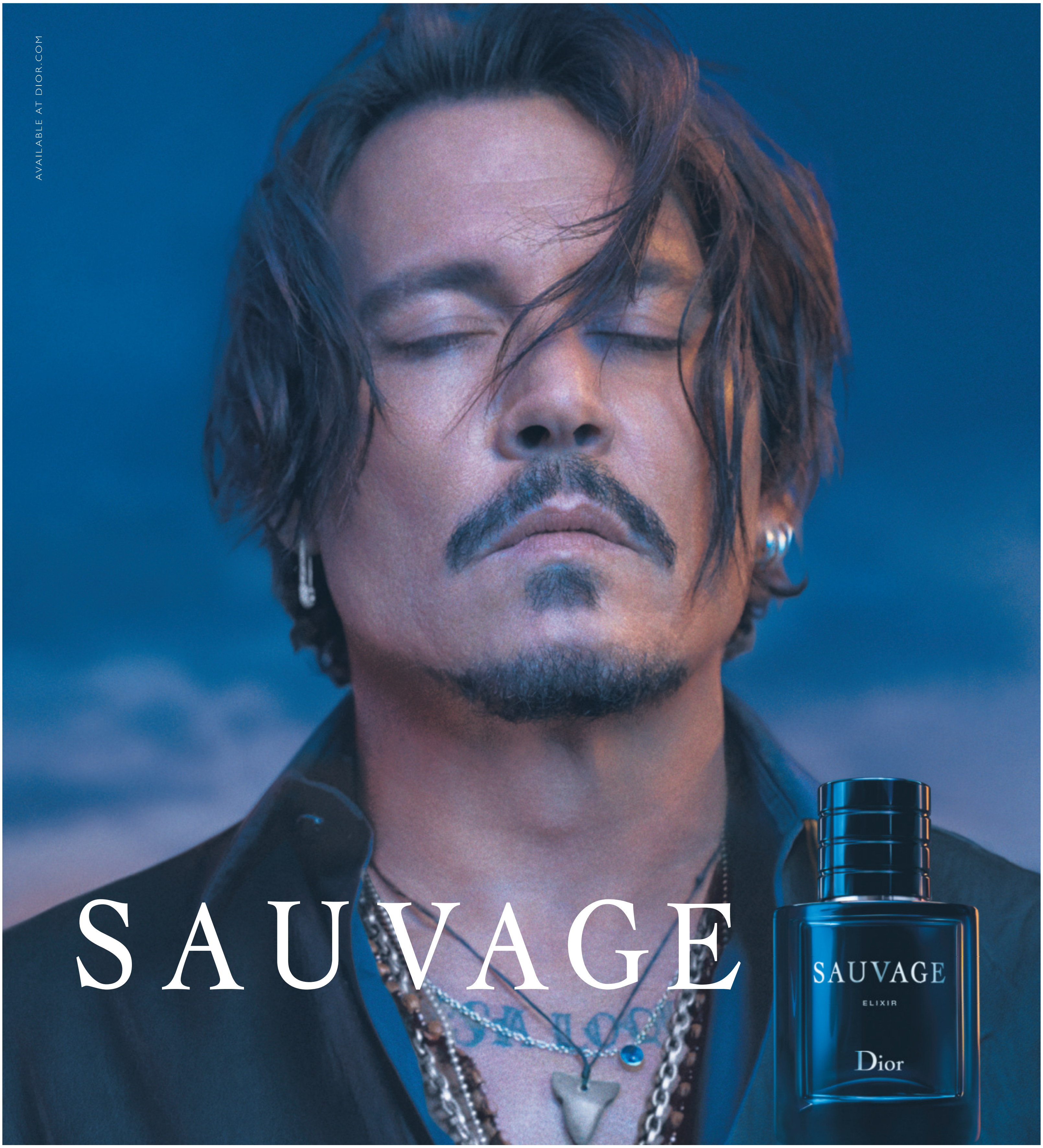
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DIOR

TIMES 2
September 6 | **2023**



Lesley Thomas and her daughters Nellie and Libby wear jackets £79.99, £79.99 and £89.99, all shop.mango.com

The world's most wanted jacket

Why we're still wearing Coco Chanel's 100-year-old style

Coco Chanel in Paris, c1937

I swear too — but I'm not the education secretary, am I, Gillian?

Carol Midgley



Remember what teachers used to say? Apart from: "Care to share the joke with the rest of the class, Carol?", "Pencils don't belong up noses" and "You CAN go to the toilet but whether you MAY is a different matter." They also said: "Swearing is the sign of a weak vocabulary." Or at least they did to me, probably when I'd just told Darren or Craig to "f*** right off" for pinging my bra.

I reflected on that this week when the education secretary Gillian Keegan was caught on a hot mike giving herself a performance review. Gillian, we now know, considers herself to be doing a "f***ing good job" as schools crumble while "everyone else" has "sat on their arse" (shouldn't that be "has been sitting on their arses"? Can "everyone" share the one arse, grammatically? It's bothering me).

> **If I had her job I wouldn't say those words to a TV journalist**

I am not going to be a raging hypocrite here. I myself sometimes use those swear words, shocking as you may find that confession. I don't agree that it shows a limited vocabulary. Swearing well is a talent, the maestro being Malcolm from *The Thick of It*, and some of the finest writers were/are also first-rate swearers. My husband has even heard me cussing like a sailor in my sleep, which I like to think shows I put the effort in 24/7. I dare say a great many of you occasionally turn the air blue too.

But then, and I hate to labour the point, we are not the "f***ing" education secretary, are we? I'm pretty sure that if I had her job I wouldn't say those words to a TV journalist with or without the microphone turned off. But then neither would I, on A-level results day, effectively say to fretting 18-year-olds that exams don't matter. Or specifically as Keegan said: "No one will ask about your grades in ten years' time." I mean, that's *true*, to be fair, but it's a very strange thing to say when you're the *education secretary*.

But maybe I'm just not moving with the times. Maybe I'm failing to be down with the kids. After all, sweary education secretaries seem to be all the rage. Consider Gavin "Poker" Williamson*, who this week apologised to MPs and will undergo behavioural training after bullying the former chief whip via a series of text messages. He messaged that



she had "f*** all" interest in pulling things together, that she had conspired to "f***" him over by not giving him a seat at the Queen's funeral and that it was all "very shit". This is a man who, when education secretary, claimed he "couldn't remember" his A-level grades. In entirely unrelated news the Daily Star's nickname for him is "Thicko".

Bullying. Swearing. Behavioural training. It's almost as if Sir Gavin (for yes, he has been knighted) has been placed in the Commons equivalent of a pupil referral unit. It's almost as if we are now through the looking glass and the politicians are behaving like the children. What's the first lesson — Pardon my French?

*Why the nickname "Poker", I hear you say. According to my colleague Patrick Kidd it's because Williamson once had an office romance. While working as a fireplace salesman.

Self-serve — or help yourself

Supermarket shoppers are increasingly having their bags checked amid a rise in shoplifting. One Sainsbury's customer in Surbiton said her bags were inspected thrice by security, along with her sun hat. Receipt scanning is also being installed as retail theft rose by 27 per cent in a year.

Oh no! If only there'd been some way of knowing that when supermarkets greedily cost-cut, creating ideal shoplifting conditions by replacing staff with self-service machines, it would result in theft. That when they treated customers like unpaid skivvies doing the job they once paid Julie, 53, to do, the shopper might behold the cheek of their shrinkflation tricks and think, "Oh dear, I 'forgot' to scan this steak."

I'm not saying self-service tills aren't handy, but shops got carried away; often there are no manned tills at all. Now they're having to employ staff to check bags. You reap what you sow. I reckon thieves will still take their chances. It's not as if the police are going to attend, is it? And given that police forces recently ordered 5,000 pairs of XXL trousers with waists of 40in or more for "blobbies on the beat", well. If they give chase they'll just crack the pavement.

The mole rat's self image

Britons have the third worst "body confidence" in the world after Australia and India, finds a study. Another study last year found we are also among the fattest, so that probably answers that.

But I do wonder if it helps to be hideously ugly. Scientists have found that the naked mole rat lives nearly ten times longer than similar-sized rodents without developing disease. Yet it is by far the least cute. Maybe we could learn from how it lives. It doesn't have social media, for instance. It doesn't go to the gym. But it does seem to have cracked the key to life.

Oh. I've just realised. The naked mole rat is virtually blind. So it has never looked in the mirror and been devastated by the fact that it looks exactly like a bald, wrinkled penis with teeth. Tip: don't get one as a pocket pet.

We were powerless, we were told so little — and Martha died

Two years ago Martha Mills, aged 13, died of sepsis in hospital. It was preventable. Rachel Sylvester talks to her parents about their campaign for the right to a second medical opinion

Martha Mills was a bright, vivacious teenager who loved making silly videos on her phone, going to the park and drinking hot chocolate with her friends. She enjoyed reading, wrote her own stories and talked about being an author, an engineer or a film director when she grew up. "I'm as jolly as a jolly bird," she used to say when she was young.

Then two years ago — a few days before her 14th birthday — she died of sepsis after a series of catastrophic errors by doctors at an NHS hospital. For her parents, nothing will ever be the same again. "There's a sense of before and after," says her mother, Merope Mills, a senior Guardian journalist. "I look back at pictures, and it's like this life exists, this perfect life that you can't get back to. And part of you can't quite understand how."

Martha's father, Paul Laity, an editor at the London Review of Books, is struck daily by how all-encompassing and permanent the alteration to the family dynamic has been. "The texture of life has changed for ever," he says. "Every single moment you spend in the house is different. Her absence is impossible to ignore."

They compare it to being on an island detached from the mainland where the "normal people" live. When Martha died Paul told Merope: "I feel like I've lost both arms, both legs, and I'm being stabbed in the heart." Now he thinks the metaphor is an inadequate way to express the pain.

"If you've lost two legs, the difference is visible. People can see that you're utterly transformed," he explains. "If you lose a child you're walking around almost as if things were as they were. All of the change is on the inside. It's hard to be in the world and be able to talk to people or behave normally."

Merope says there's a "weird" urge to tell people about the tragedy. "You will be buying coffee and you want to say: 'You think I'm a normal person, but you won't believe what's happened to me'. I remember walking past people with kids in the street thinking: 'Don't you understand your child could suddenly just die at any moment?' You seek out other bereaved parents because only they really understand."

The grief is tinged with anger and regret. Paul says his thoughts revolve around two questions: can he forgive the doctors and the hospital who failed his daughter, and can he forgive himself? "A lot of the anger I turn on myself, because I have this fantasy of saving her and this sense of having failed to protect her. There are moments where I think I could have done something different and she would have been fine. When I visit Martha's grave the first thing I always say is: 'I'm so sorry.'" But he insists: "I'm also angry with the hospital."

Looking back, Merope feels naive about the faith she put in the medics who were treating her daughter. "We feel like we let her down by trusting the doctors," she says. "I kept saying to her: 'Don't worry, you are in the best place. They know what they're doing.' I really thought that was the case and I feel a fool now for thinking it. Why with something this important was I so blind to the problems within hospitals? Why did I just think they would do the best they could?"

We talk for almost two hours in the sunny garden of their north London home. Merope is wearing a necklace made up of the letters of Martha's name. Inside the house the couple's other daughter, Lottie, who is 14, plays with the family's new puppy. Martha's bedroom remains as it was the day she died, drawers left open with her jeans



Merope Mills with her daughter Martha and, above right, with Martha's father, Paul Laity

and hoodies spilling out, although Lottie has rearranged her desk with some of her sister's favourite things.

The couple are campaigning for a new "Martha's Rule" giving patients and families the right to a second opinion if they're concerned about the medical care they're receiving. The government said this week that it is looking at the change, and Wes Streeting, the shadow health secretary, has promised to introduce it if Labour wins power. Merope and Paul know that the reform cannot bring their daughter back, but they want to make sure that other parents do not have to endure the same incomprehensible loss. "Looking back on it I feel we were powerless, I feel we were kept in the dark about a lot of things. We were told so little," Merope says. "I don't think it's enough just to say: 'We're going to listen to patients more.' There should be a line people can ring to say: 'I am scared for myself or my family member and I do not think I'm getting the correct care.' I really believe that it could have saved Martha's life."

Martha's death was entirely avoidable. She was cycling while on a family holiday in Wales when she slipped and fell onto the handlebars of her bike. At first her parents thought that she was simply winded. But that night she was sick and in a lot of pain, so they took her to the local A&E.

In fact, the force of the fall had pushed her pancreas against her spine, causing a laceration. Martha was transferred by helicopter to a unit specialising in young people with pancreatic trauma at King's College Hospital in London. There she developed sepsis, but she was not transferred to the paediatric intensive care unit quickly enough.

At one point Merope raised concerns about a suspicious rash, but she was dismissed as an "anxious mother". Even when the nurses registered that Martha was "at risk" they weren't heard by the more senior medical professionals. The consultants on the Rays of Sunshine Ward, many of them professors, looked down on junior doctors in the intensive care unit.

"This wasn't about money," Merope says. "We thought we were in the best place, but in this instance the best place meant the worst place because it came with a kind of hubris which meant that they thought they were in some way superior. It's often said, 'Doctors make mistakes, they're only humans.' But they are human in all other senses as well. They are prone to arrogance, coasting, laziness, fear, competition between departments. Our child's life was caught in the crossfire."

During the pandemic Martha and Lottie banged saucepans for the NHS. "We always said to the girls, 'The NHS is one of the great things about this country,' and I still think that," Merope says. "But I think that conversation has stopped people talking about the cultural problems in the NHS." Paul blames a combination of institutional and individual flaws. "There was a catalogue of mistakes and inexplicable behaviour, systemic problems but also complacency and arrogance. When we reflect on it every day we don't cease to be shocked."

Merope and Paul alternated days in the hospital so one of them was always with their daughter, but there was no consistency of care from the hospital. "No one was aware of her trajectory. Every time a new consultant came along, which was almost every day, it was a new normal. They failed to identify the fact that she was getting progressively worse for a week or more."

After a series of infections, Martha started bleeding profusely from the tubes in her arm and stomach. "It was very bad," Merope says. "The nurses were waking me at night saying we need to change her because it's gone all over her sheets. She would have a bandage, a patch and it would go through all of that and through her pyjamas. I've still got her blood-soaked pyjamas upstairs. She was bleeding a lot and it was scary. She must have been so scared but she was so brave. I feel so bad about saying how well she handled it because I think she was trying to handle it well for us."

> **"We feel like we let her down by trusting the doctors"**
> Merope Mills, mother

> **"When we reflect on it every day we don't cease to be shocked"**
> Paul Laity, father

The bleeding was a sign of sepsis. On Friday Merope told the consultant that she feared Martha might go into septic shock over the bank holiday weekend but she was told she was wrong. She didn't have the confidence to challenge medical advice. "I asked the nurse whether there was anything to worry about and she said, 'Trust the doctors,' and I remember saying to myself: 'Yes, that's a good idea. You know nothing, they are the experts.'"

By Sunday morning her condition had deteriorated significantly. "When the consultant saw Martha on the ward round she was much, much worse than they were expecting. She had very low blood pressure."

But they didn't tell her mother anything, instead just whispering to each other outside. "Then the person who was in charge of Martha that day went home," Paul says. "He failed to draw up a plan of care even though, as he admits, she was a critically ill patient." Hospital wards are, he points out "like the Marie Celeste" on weekends. Vital tests were delayed. "If Martha had been in intensive care from Friday or before I'm sure she would not have died."

At five o'clock that afternoon "Martha had severe sepsis, she had very low blood pressure, incredibly fast heart rate, she had a fever and a rash," Paul says. "She had every single kind of symptom of sepsis."

She scored eight on the risk metric. Normally a score of five leads to a discussion about transfer to intensive care, but inexplicably Martha was kept on the paediatric ward. "The junior doctor who was looking after Martha didn't visit her once overnight," Merope says. "She didn't walk from the office, which was 40 steps up the corridor. She said she didn't feel it was her job to look after the very ill patients."

At 5.45 on Monday morning Martha had a seizure in her mother's arms. "Even then they didn't take Merope seriously," Paul says. "They just wanted to put Martha to bed. There was an assumption that Merope was overreacting." By then it was too late. "I remember Martha saying, 'It feels like it's unfixable,'" Merope recalls. "That to me is the worst of all of it. I think she knew she was going to die."

A coroner's inquest found that if Martha had been referred more promptly to the paediatric intensive care unit and appropriately treated, "the likelihood is that she would have survived her injuries". But when Paul and Merope met a very senior consultant who had treated Martha and asked what he would have done differently, he replied: "Nothing." .

The risks taken were astonishing, Merope says. "The one thing I can tell you for a fact is if it had been their kid in that ward, with that injury, bleeding on that Wednesday there is no way they would have left them there. I know for a fact they would never have taken the risks with their own child's life they took with Martha's life. It was not caring enough, not caring the same amount as they would for their own kid as our kid, and the mistake I made is in assuming they would."

That "doctor knows best" attitude is why they are campaigning for an urgent change to make it easier for patients and their families to challenge the system. Under Martha's Rule, people would have the right to ask for a second opinion from a medical professional unrelated to the existing team. There would be a dedicated helpline for people to call, with stickers and posters highlighting its existence near every bed.

The proposed rule is modelled on the Call 4 Concern system which has been adopted by a number of hospitals in the UK, giving patients a way to escalate their concerns. In Queensland, Australia, Ryan's Rule — introduced in 2007 following the death of two-year-old Ryan Saunders after his parents' worries were ignored — has successfully saved lives.

The NHS claims that patients are already able to seek a second opinion, but Merope says: "It's incredibly hard to challenge a doctor in a hospital setting; the system is not set up for that kind of challenge, so it needs to be structured, formalised and advertised around the hospital."

The evidence from the existing systems is that patients do not abuse the helpline to make vexatious complaints. Martha's parents play over and over again in their minds the last few days of her life. "There are so many 'if onlys' and 'what ifs' and sliding doors," Merope says.

"We almost walked up Snowdonia that day, but we booked the bikes instead. She was going so slowly. She was the most risk-averse person I've met in my life, we used to call her Captain Sensible. We see people doing dangerous things, cycling down main roads with their child without a helmet or balancing on the handlebars, and you think, how can you be fine and Martha be dead? It makes no sense."

Martha would have been 16 on Monday, going into her GCSE year and with great plans for the future. "She always wanted to do an escape room every birthday. Would she still want to do an escape room? I have no idea. She's frozen in time," Merope says.

"Would she want to watch this film? What music would she like? Would those people still be her friends? The depressing thing for us is that we don't know. You know that feeling if your kid isn't invited to a birthday party when they're little you feel they've missed out. That's what the whole of life is for us now, just seeing things she's missed out on."

Paul says everyone thinks that the anniversaries and birthdays are the hardest for bereaved parents. "But actually I find just a normal day can be the worst because they are the days when we were getting on with our lives, they are the days when Martha would come home from school and she'd have stories to tell or she'd be singing a song or she'd sit down and practise her cello or she'd be in a grump or she'd be squabbling with her sister. Those are the days when I miss her the most and which are most painful because she should simply be carrying on with her life."

fashion

STYLING ASSISTANTS: HARRIETTE VICKERY AND NELLIE BLACK



Lesley Thomas and her daughters Nellie and Libby
Nellie wears pink jacket, £179, karenmillen.com; Lesley wears black jacket, £359, lkbennett.com; Libby wears cream jacket, £37.99, hm.com



Coco Chanel in Paris in 1959

Chanelmania! We all want Coco's jacket

As an exhibition of the designer's work opens at the V&A, Hannah Rogers asks women of all ages to model her style

The style set arrive for Fashion Week next Wednesday — but this season London's designer catwalks have an even bigger fashion event to compete with: the V&A's exhibition on Chanel.

You don't need me to remind you of that — you probably already have your ticket. It opens on Saturday, September 16, but is already sold out until late November.

Those who enjoyed the twirling tulle ball gowns of the Dior exhibit and the avant-garde theatrics of 2009's sold-out McQueen fest will know why: the museum's designer showcases are must-sees. Soon its display cases will house the Chanel items we all still wear in some way or another now: bouclé tweed, quilted handbags and pearls.

It's well documented how influential she is on your wardrobe. Coco Chanel is the woman behind trousers, Breton stripe tops — even red lipstick and having a tan. Not forgetting the shoes and bags: those two-tone beige and black pumps and the legendary 2.55 flap bag. That accessory is beyond ubiquitous: its diamond quilted leather exterior and crossbody gold chain — designed to give women the freedom to go hands-free — make it still one of the most desired It bags in the world. Ditto its knock-offs.

Then there is the Chanel jacket. You know the type: boxy, cropped or long, square shoulders and statement buttons. It is as copied as that aforementioned bag. Princess Diana owned an original; the Princess of Wales of 2023 has worn one too. Jackie Kennedy was wearing hers in Dallas the day her husband was assassinated. Marge Simpson's was pink.

Chanel designed her first in the 1920s. When researching my book, *The Chanel Style Principles*, I found that she was inspired by the tailoring



Order *The Chanel Style Principles* by Hannah Rogers now at lnk.to/ChanelStylePrinciples

CAMERA PRESS/KAMMERMAN/RAPHO/GAMMA





Georgina Roberts and her mother, Selena, below
Georgina wears the Angelica jacket, £379, lkbennett.com

Selena wears the Charlee jacket, £359, lkbennett.com



COVER AND BELOW: CHRIS MCANDREW FOR THE TIMES; HAIR: ELVIRIE ROUX/CAROL HAYES; MAKE UP: JULIA WREN USING NARS AND SKINCEUTICALS



Twins Emma, left, and Natalie Hammond
Emma wears bouclé crop jacket, £325, meandem.com

Natalie wears cropped jacket with golden buttons, £149, massimodutti.com



Margot Robbie wears the real thing

worn by her lover the Duke of Westminster. In the era of corsets she pioneered waist liberation, determined to offer her clients the freedom and comfort that men enjoyed from their wardrobes. She also, it is rumoured, wanted a jacket with pockets in which to stash her cigarettes.

Oriole Cullen, the V&A's curator of modern textiles and fashion, tells me that more than 60 will be on show at the museum — and frankly the mannequins there are as close as most of us will get to the real deal. These days one will set you back north of £6,000, and the second-hand market is thriving. On Vestiaire Collective and Hardly Ever Worn It the starting price for a style in good nick is about £1,500; rare vintage models can cost ten times that.

It is not hard to find affordable versions. Every season more appear on the high street. Mango has about eight on its store rails now — the best selection by far, I think, from £49.99 (shop.mango.com). There's a lovely navy woven check take at & Other Stories (£135, stories.com). LK Bennett's Charlee jackets, in cream, black or navy, with their neat piping and matching skirts, come closest — perhaps that's why they cost the most (£359, lkbennett.com).

These jackets can be worn with anything: matching Chanel tweed hot pants on the front row (really) or jeans and mididresses in the real world. We rounded up a line-up of stylish women to prove it. Millennial Natalie Hammond is the senior fashion news editor at Grazia; Emma is her twin sister. The Times Weekend editor, Lesley Thomas, is pictured with her teenage and twentysomething daughters Libby and Nellie. Gen-Z Times writer Georgina Roberts, wearing black, poses with her mother too — she is in cream.

How they have styled themselves is proof that the best Chanel copycats are cool across generations. That's not just down to what the jacket is worn with (a mini pleated skort v a midi denim skirt, for example) but how it has been tweaked.

The original came collarless, straight up and down and in plain black — but there's a buffet of choice in 2023. From a full spectrum of colours to heart-shaped buttons, there are many ways now to pull off a look like Chanel's.

I am a big fan of Mango's lilac check bomber jacket, £89.99, modelled by 19-year-old Libby on the cover. Other good takes available to shop right now: Me & Em's olive green bouclé crop (£325), Zara's collared baby pink and white check (£59.99) and H&M's monochrome weave or sky blue (£37.99). Look for styles with front pockets, chunky hardware and an unwaisted shape if you want to properly emulate the real thing.

And if I had to pick just one — and of course, I have — it would be the flaming scarlet take from Mango (£79.99). It looks superb with my leopard-print jeans. The very special silver Chanel slingbacks my mum bought me for my 30th too. Don't judge me for having the real thing — there are plenty of quality lookalikes out there, and indeed I own a pair of those as well. But sometimes finally getting your hands on the original is worth it.

***Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto* opens at the V&A, London SW7, on September 16. Tickets £24, vam.ac.uk**

Five more great 'Chanel' jackets

- **Maje cream short tweed jacket, £339, uk.maje.com**
- **M&S monochrome check collarless short tweed jacket, £79, marksandspencer.com**
- **Massimo Dutti black textured cropped jacket, £149, massimodutti.com**
- **Mint Velvet gold trim navy bouclé jacket, £159, mintvelvet.com**
- **Sister Jane green macaron tweed jacket, £95, johnlewis.com**

fashion

Get set for autumn — are you

UNIQLO


Jacket, £79.90, sweater, £39.90, and trousers, £39.90, Uniqlo:C at uniqlo.com


Clare Waight Keller


Sweater, £34.90, and skirt, £49.90, Uniqlo:C at uniqlo.com


Coat, £109.90, and hat, £24.90, Uniqlo:C at uniqlo.com

Uniqlo's new range is by the woman behind Meghan Markle's wedding dress. Anna Murphy meets her


Meghan Markle wearing Givenchy by Clare Waight Keller on her wedding day

Feeling a tad back-to-school-y? Here's some good news. One of the best high street collections I have seen in ages launches next week. It's called Uniqlo:C, and it's been conjured up by one of this country's best designers. I am talking about Clare Waight Keller, formerly of Givenchy and Chloé, among other luxury operations, and also known for designing some wedding dress or other a few years back. (The bride was called Meghan.)

More on all of that in a minute. Uniqlo:C is a 34-piece collaboration that is available from September 15. The somewhat gnomic name is the only tricky thing about it. Here are clothes that tick all those 2023 holy grail boxes, from the perfect trench (£109.90) to the perfect chunky loafers (£39.90) by way of a grey half-zip jumper (£39.90) that, just to look at it, almost makes me wish away the heatwave.

Yet if the individual parts are good, the sum of them is even better. What immediately strikes you is a subtle tone-on-tone palette designed to beguile even the most adamant of colour refuseniks, and how everything is conceived to be layered up or down for maximum versatility, and in such a way as to add interest rather than bulk.

When I talk with Waight Keller, 53, over Zoom she tells me her primary motivation was, as she puts it, "ease of wardrobe". She wanted to create finessed takes on the items that have become the workhorses of contemporary dressing. "These are the pieces you want in your wardrobe for life — timeless without being boring."

Uniqlo is all about textile innovation; the ultra-expensive realm of luxury in which Waight Keller worked for years, not so much. "That's really opened up a new kind of creativity for me." Something else she is enjoying, she tells me, is being able to design clothes that are so affordable, so "democratic".

The daughter of an engineer father and a legal secretary mother, when she was growing up she "couldn't afford Vogue. But I was going to markets, buying fabrics, holding the fabric on the dining room table whilst my mum cut around the pattern."

When I last interviewed Waight Keller for The Times, she was designing blouses that cost well over a grand a pop. When her home-sewing mother died last year, she knew her daughter had begun working with Uniqlo. This was the woman who would tell her as a child to "'Unpick that, it's not right.' She instilled a lot of things that became, later in my life, important tools."

Waight Keller, smiling sadly, says that "she always loved what I did in my career. But she especially loved the idea that now so many more of her friends and my friends would be able to buy what I was designing."

The designer's most illustrious moment was creating Meghan Markle's Givenchy wedding dress in 2018. "It was the most incredible career-defining moment. I was happy to be representing what I felt to be a new chapter in the royal family." She won't be drawn on what happened next. "I am still incredibly proud of that moment, and we are still great friends."

Waight Keller doesn't rule out working in luxury again. "I would love to get back into it, and there are definitely things around," she says cryptically. Despite her everywoman vibe, she isn't entirely like the rest of us. "I have a lot of luxury in my archive that I wear all the time," she says. Yes, she has an archive.

Yet the designer feels understandably disillusioned, like many women I speak to, by some of her past experiences in luxury. "Women remain incredibly under-represented," she says. "There's still this focus on drama rather than reality, on showmanship rather than what the everyday experience of the clothes might be. That's why the brands I buy tend to be headed up by women. There's this emotional connection when you put something on, this emphasis on how something feels to wear."

Uniqlo or Marks this season?

M&S



M&S Collection coat, £79, shirt, £29.50, jumper, £19.50, trousers, £35, and bag, £39.50



Autograph blazer, £119, shirt, £49.50, jumper, £95, trousers, £199, and shoes, £35



M&S Collection coat, £89, jacket, £79, jeans, £32.50, bag, £39.50

Harriet Walker has a preview of M&S's autumn styles. She likes what she sees

A king, a football team in a World Cup final and M&S back in the black — the nation is experiencing a vibe shift, and the high-street stalwart unveiled a new-season uniform for it yesterday. These were not just M&S clothes, they were M&S-with-a-spring-in-its-step clothes.

Expect to weather the next phase of the cozzie livs in their take on so-called quiet luxury: tailoring, classic layers and easily styled updates. An expensive-looking £89 grey wool coat and £75 faux shearling-lined aviator jacket. The £39.50 black handbag that owes something to an Hermès Birkin and £35 black flared-heel slingbacks to go with every pair of jeans you own.

After 2014's sell-out pink coat comes a soft-shouldered red bouclé-ish version, yours for £79. It's one of a few "colour pops" in an otherwise sophisticated and tonal selection. Gallingly, the £35 split-front denim maxiskirt I try to buy en route to the office after its autumn/winter event — either in white or black, both are great — is already sold out online, but my next target will be a £199 pair of silver leather trousers from the top-tier Autograph collection. They might sound expensive and outré, but designer versions have been a front-row staple for a few seasons now, so I've seen how adaptable they are and what an easy statement they make.

This is precisely the thinking at M&S now, says Maddy Evans, the brand's director of womenswear. "Great versatility pieces you can bring out and wear with something different — layering for multiple looks, and because you never know what the temperature will be."

After a rainy summer, the fact that it is an unpredictable 30C outside the event hasn't dented spirits either. Evans — who arrived from Topshop in 2019 as M&S's sales plummeted and the word "frumpiness" was in play (from the company's chief executive, no less) — in April delivered a 40 per cent rise in sales of casual dresses and the Autograph range. Percy Pig no longer looks as though the weight of the world is on his shoulders, and neither do Evans's team.

"We're evolving without alienating," she says, beaming. "[The customers are] buying more, and we're attracting younger ones too."



Goodmove coat, £59; fleece, £45; top, £29.50; trousers, £35; backpack, £49.50; boots, £75



Trainers, £45, and heels, £35, marksandspencer.com

The latest range doesn't skew Gen Z, however — it acknowledges that shopping habits now align more with one's tastes and outlook than one's date of birth. The £119 double-breasted navy blazer that Evans is wearing feels close to universal, as do satin slip skirts in autumn's most chic chocolate brown and a zingy lime green.

The team has had some help in defrumping by a more general sleekening of trends: the rise of cautious classics and decline of the ubiquitous floral midi, a style that can — in the wrong window on the wrong mannequin — tend towards what my mother refers to as "workhouse". That one of the brand's recent bestsellers recently is a black waistcoat proves a definite shift — it is worn as part of a suit by the actress Sienna Miller in the chain's forthcoming ad campaign.

Another nod to changing wardrobes comes in an outdoorsy hiking capsule; anoraks, zip-off cargo pants and noticeably tasteful fleeces acknowledge the influence of technical brands such as Patagonia on people's off-duty clobber, and will mix in with smarter pieces too. Tough economic times tend to drive shoppers back to familiar brands, and this re-upped version of M&S is ready to welcome them home.

arts

MICHAEL LECKIE FOR THE TIMES; CHRISTIAN MARQUARD, ROBBIE JACK, /GETTY IMAGES







‘Streaming opera has been a disaster’

As he stages a new Ring Cycle for Covent Garden, director Barrie Kosky tells Neil Fisher that cinema broadcasts won’t bring new audiences to the theatre

‘Is that blood? It’s too thin. I need a Tarantino splurge!” Nothing gets the opera world’s heart pumping like a new production of Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*. The Royal Opera House announced its new staging in the depths of the pandemic — a tantalising shimmer of Rheingold when it felt as though we were all in locked-down Nibelheim.

There was even greater sparkle when Barrie Kosky was attached to the project. The director — who during a decade in charge of the Komische Oper, Berlin’s “third” opera house, turned the theatre into a byword for crowd-pleasing yet thought-provoking entertainment — is a garrulous, outspoken Australian. Once seen his shows are usually not forgotten.

Right now, in the rehearsal room at Covent Garden, he’s sweating over a key moment in *Das Rheingold*, the first part of the cycle, in which the giant Fafner brutally kills his brother, Fasolt — the first victim of the curse of the ring. Kosky wants the perpetrator drenched in gore, but the singer, Soloman Howard, has been left with only a stained vest and a direct squirt in the eye. “It’s a splat,” Kosky says as the props squad gather round for the post-mortem, “not a splatter.” A thoughtful hush falls. Under his breath an amused Antonio Pappano, the conductor of the production, starts singing a line from *Tosca* about blood-stained hands.

Kosky and Wagner have not always got on. The 56-year-old, a self-proclaimed “Jewish gay kangaroo”, has previous form with the *Ring*: an unsuccessful collaboration with the State Theatre of Hanover that began in 2009. “I was terribly unhappy with my efforts,” Kosky says. “I was really struggling as well with my relationship with Wagner and his works. I felt that he was like a *dybbuk* in rehearsals.” In Jewish folklore a dybbuk is the malevolent spirit of a dead person. Wagner “got inside of me, trying to unleash something poisonous”.

What helped was another, much more successful Wagner production eight years later, *Die Meistersinger* in 2017 at the Bayreuth Festival, the epicentre of the Wagner cult still run by the Wagner family. Here, by poking fun at the “Meister” in an uproarious yet moving show, which also tackled antisemitism and Nazism head-on, he finally laid the ghost to rest. “I wasn’t afraid any more,” he says. “Ironically, being in Bayreuth was what released me from this Dutchman curse.”

The success of Kosky’s *Meistersinger* prompted many offers to try again with the *Ring*, but he wanted to do it outside a German-speaking country. “Post-1945 in Germany, audiences are constantly aware of the ‘problem’ about Wagner. It muddies the water enormously.” Directing Wagner in Britain “becomes a different thing. You don’t have that pressure. And I don’t have to be sitting there as a Jew.”

It is a strange thing that in an age when cultural figures are under scrutiny for wrongthink as they have never been before, it’s still boom time for Wagner despite the composer’s warped views. “I think you’re right,” Kosky admits, “he does seem to have a sort of get-out-of-jail-free card.”

But Kosky would rather stand up for exposure than censorship. “If we go down the road of ‘anything an artist says that is unacceptable means their work is not seen or heard’ . . . then we might as well go get another job. Art is finished. It’s because these things are uncomfortable that they must be discussed and interpreted. And let’s not start with the idea that only Jews can play Jews and only trans people can play trans and only gay people can play gay.” I mention the controversy of the fake nose that Bradley Cooper sports while playing play Leonard Bernstein in *Maestro*. Kosky is derisive. “Relax! It’s a f***ing Hollywood film. It looks fake and ridiculous. But if he wants to do it, let him do it.”

When it comes to the *Ring*, Kosky argues, there’s no point straining for contemporary relevance. “Masterpieces do it themselves — that’s the joy with Wagner, and in virtually every line you go: ‘Oh God, well that could be now.’ The challenge is to not then double it on the stage and just make everything domestic; everything contemporary. There are now as many clichés of contemporary Wagner productions as there are of spear-carrying and horned helmets.”

Kosky is aghast at what a new generation has done with the epic. “They have basically wreaked havoc on it. A young German director will attempt to detonate it; take nothing seriously. And if you’ve not taken it seriously how can you expect the audience to sit there for nearly 16 hours?”

For Kosky the challenge of the piece is balance — “when you want the mythic poetic abstraction, and when you want to hone it down into that family drama”. No, this *Ring* isn’t set on Wall Street, on the Moon or in a concentration camp (all are possible in Wagnerland). “People say: ‘Where are you setting the *Ring*?’ I say: ‘It’s set on the stage.’” One narrative foothold is offered by Kosky’s inclusion of a mute actress to play the goddess Erda — in *Das Rheingold* “the starting point is that we are watching the dreams and memories and visions of Mother Earth”.

He doesn’t go along with the idea that a *Ring* needs to be a budget-draining effort for an opera house. “There’s an expectation that it costs an enormous amount because there are so many theatrical things you have to get right. But I have always believed you can do spectacular and you can do interesting, and it doesn’t have to be expensive.”

But Kosky also wants the audience to make an effort. Get him on accessibility and he is adamant that opera needs more mystery, not less. “I’ve always said, for opera to survive it has to be more operatic. Reducing it to just a sort of nice ‘night out’ entertainment is to take away the great ritual.”

Your best bet of seeing *Das Rheingold* this autumn is via the live cinema relay — the production has been sold out for months — but Kosky is not a fan of opera at the flicks. “Live stream and television HD of opera has been one of the biggest disasters. Now that I’m not an [opera house manager] I can say my job is to bring people into the theatre for a live experience. And if they have to travel to do that then they should.” Isn’t it about coaxing the reluctant first-timer into their “first bite”, then hoping that they’ll pay for the real McCoy? “I don’t think the payoff is big enough to say we’re bringing opera to a huge audience. It doesn’t work like that. They don’t come.”

A few years into his Berlin job Kosky was interviewed by Cressida Pollock, at that time the English National Opera chief executive, for the role of artistic director. It did not go well. “I said, ‘Before you take over this company there needs to be a very big discussion — what is English National Opera? What does the name mean? What is the work that should be done here? And who’s it for?’ No one really addressed those big issues. It was quite clear that no one knew what they were doing.”

But if Kosky is pessimistic about the arts climate in the UK, he is worried too about political currents in Germany, notably the far-right party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). “They’ve gone from being clowns into being a serious political threat, which is slightly terrifying. I don’t want to be a doomsayer, but I think we should be alarmed.”

The weaponising of identity politics — “pronouns; trans rights” — is also something to be taken seriously. Kosky thinks that such issues are important, but in Germany the way that left-wing parties talk about them has backfired. “These are becoming the burning issues of the day. And in terms of the general public, you are driving voters further right.” What gives him some relief is that the AfD will only be a truly credible threat, he says, when they have a “serious, provocative leader”.

Wagner, as ever, has such a figure in prepackaged form: in *Das Rheingold* the innocent Rhinemaidens believe that all is well until the serious, provocative Alberich wrongfoots them, unleashing terror, bending the masses to his will. “Yes, when that person emerges, that’s when we should be worried,” Kosky says. “Whenever Alberich comes back.”

Clockwise from above left: Barrie Kosky and his productions of The Magic Flute (2012), Saul (2018) and The Nose (2016)

***Das Rheingold* is at the Royal Opera House from September 11 and in cinemas on September 20, roh.org.uk**



My coil gave me years of agony, it took everything from me

Jan Faulkner's coil left her in terrible pain and she wasn't alone. Now she's suing its makers. By Deborah Linton

On a Monday night in February 2019 Jan Faulkner sat down at her kitchen table with her new, work-issue laptop, a piece of paper and a list containing hundreds of women's names. Like her, they had lost years of their lives to excruciating, even "suicidal", pain caused by a so-called lunch-hour sterilisation device. Fitted in less than 15 minutes at GP surgeries and NHS hospitals, the device had been called an easy, non-surgical birth-control method. For Faulkner, a call-centre worker in her mid-thirties at the time, the injury caused by the Essure coil, manufactured by Bayer the company behind Alka-Selzer, Berocca and Aspirin, had left her housebound, unable to work or care for her five children and feeling as though she was "dying from the inside".

After undergoing surgery to remove the 4cm springs from her fallopian tubes eight years after they were fitted, she found that she was far from alone. Online she discovered thousands of women sharing stories of intense pelvic pain, severe bleeding, corroded coils and nickel poisoning. For many, full hysterectomies had followed.

After coming across a campaign pursuing legal action against Bayer in America, Faulkner was determined that some of the 100,000 women estimated by lawyers to have been fitted with the implants in Britain should have their day in court too. For years she knocked on lawyers' doors and was turned away. "No one had the gusto to take it on," says Faulkner, now 51. "I had men in suits ask if it was just my age or the menopause." However, eventually a firm agreed not only to take on the case, but also Faulkner, as an employee, so that she could work on it as a class-action lawsuit.

The case brought by Faulkner, dubbed Britain's Erin Brockovich, after the US activist who built and won a group litigation against utilities giants despite having no legal background, this week won about 200 women the right to sue Bayer in the British courts. If they win, the compensation bill for the German company could run to more than £10 million.

"My mission was to build an army," Faulkner says from Warrington, where she lives with three of her sons, the youngest aged 16. "Women were contacting me in their hundreds; women who needed a voice and answers to their questions."



Jan Faulkner

> "Hundreds of women contacted me. They needed help and a voice

The Essure implant, now discontinued, worked differently to a traditional contraceptive coil, placing springs in the patients' fallopian tubes, where nickel and polyester fibres attached and caused scar tissue, blocking eggs from reaching the uterus. Faulkner's implant was fitted in 2008, two years after she had given birth to her fifth child. "I went to the hospital and asked to get sterilised," she says. "I thought they'd cut my tubes, but the consultant said that they had this new procedure and I'd be back on my feet straight away."

Over three years she progressively experienced hip and back pain and fatigue. In 2011 she stood up at work and felt grinding hip pain so severe that she couldn't walk. "The pain became horrific," she says. "I could no longer drive a car, bend to put the kids' shoes on or do the school run. My blood pressure was raging; the anxiety and exhaustion were overwhelming. I went back and forth to the GP and tried every pain medication. I had always worked full time, but I had to give it up and couldn't socialise. It took everything from me."

Faulkner became housebound until, in 2016, she thought: "I can't go on like this." She found a sports therapist online who treated her at home. "She asked if I'd had any procedures in the past few years and told me that it looked like fibromyalgia [which causes widespread bodily pain]," Faulkner says. "I typed 'fibromyalgia symptoms' into Google. The first post I clicked on was from a woman on an American Essure group on Facebook containing thousands of women. I couldn't believe what I was reading. The similarities between her story and mine were so uncanny that when I read it to my husband, Lee, that evening he asked, 'When did you write that?'"

Faulkner went back to her GP, demanded a gynaecological appointment and wrote to the hospital asking for her notes to support her theory that it was the implant that had made her ill. "Six weeks later they removed my tubes to get the springs out," she says. "I was lucky — I'd say that 99 per cent of women need a full hysterectomy."

The operation was on June 1, 2016. "The day I came home it felt as though the sun had come out; the colour returned to my face and the pain subsided," Faulkner says.

Faulkner returned to work but she was not done with her quest for answers. Via the American Facebook group she had found two British women in a similar position and launched a UK group for others who'd suffered complications.

"I could have said, 'I'm well now, that's that,' but I couldn't do that," she says. "With each day the group numbers were swelling." It's now at more than 1,400 women. "I was on there before work, on my dinner break, when the kids went to bed. Groups were popping up in Spain, France, Italy. None of them had been listened to either. We had women join who were still being offered the device too. We started writing to hospitals and solicitors. We wanted posters in GP surgeries encouraging people to ask questions if they experienced symptoms."

When Essure was withdrawn from sale in most countries in 2017 — 2018 in the US — Bayer cited commercial reasons. It was the first victory for the women who had campaigned and Faulkner flew to Las Vegas, where hundreds met to celebrate. "I stood up and spoke in front of women like me from all over the world. It was very emotional. It felt so much better knowing that someone was listening."

Class-action suits followed in Australia and America, where Bayer reached a £1.2 billion settlement for nearly 40,000 claims in 2020.

Pogust Goodhead, the law firm representing the 200 British women, made contact with Faulkner in 2019 when she responded to its ad seeking patients who had been injured by the device. "I'd had so many law firms slam doors in my face; I got straight on the phone," she says.

She met one of the firm's partners over dinner and he offered her a job on the spot as client liaison, tasked with gathering other women for a group case. She walked into the office, behind Liverpool Town Hall, for her first day the following Monday. "There were all these young, educated paralegals, and little me," she says. "I went home with my laptop, a phone and the list of women, and thought, 'What's my role, here?' No one could know better than me what they were going through. I had to break down the barriers between them and the legal system and build our army."

Faulkner knew early on that she couldn't be part of the claim. Legal action relating to health products must be brought within ten years of them going to market, and her device was manufactured in 2006, two years before it was fitted in 2008 and ten years before her operation to fix the damage. "You get more guarantee with your kettle," she says. "I can never be compensated for what I've lost in terms of my health or financially. There are a lot of women who, like me, are out of time, but we can stand alongside those who can claim. As women we often have to fight our own corner when it comes to health. I tell everyone, 'Do your own research, ask questions, demand second opinions, don't let anyone dismiss you by telling you you're mad, hormonal or menopausal.'"

Bayer says that claimants are yet to prove the merits of their alleged claims, adding: "Bayer believes the claims brought in this litigation are without merit and will vigorously defend itself.

"Bayer's highest priority is the safety profile and effectiveness of our products, and we have great sympathy for anyone who has experienced health problems while using any of our products, regardless of cause. The company stands by the safety profile and efficacy of Essure."

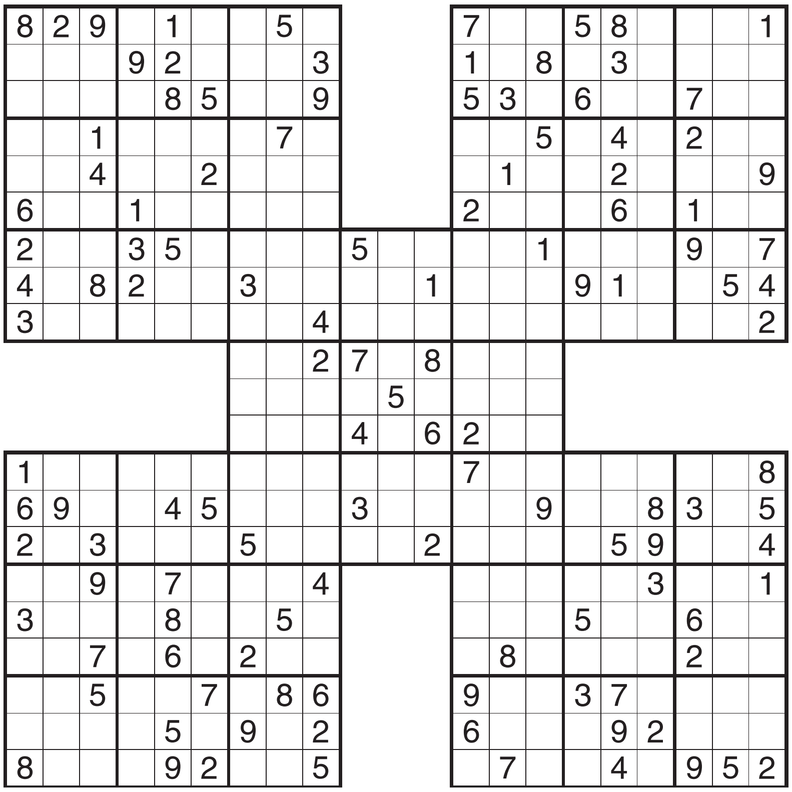
Your weekday brain boost

More puzzles Pages 14-16

Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout

Samurai difficult

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

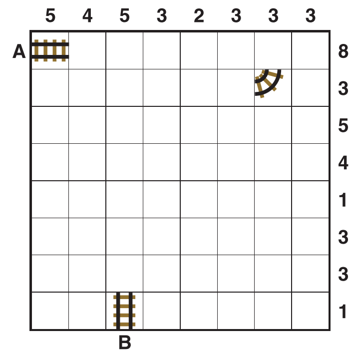


Sudoku easy

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		6	8		7			
				3		6		

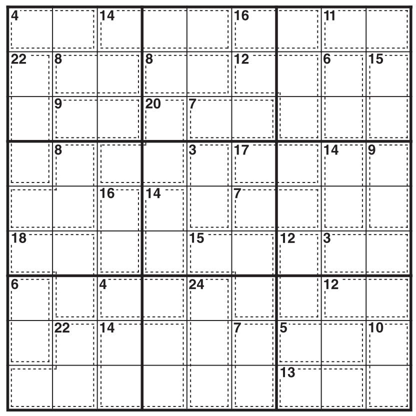
Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.



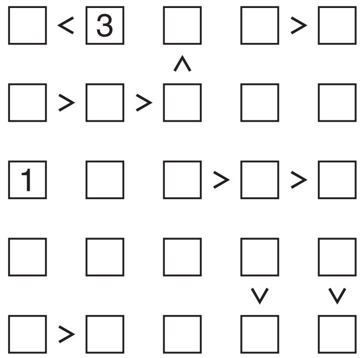
Killer gentle

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

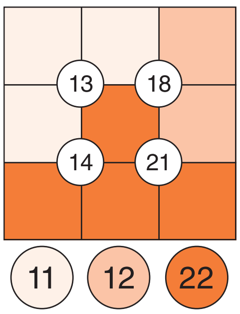


Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.



Suko

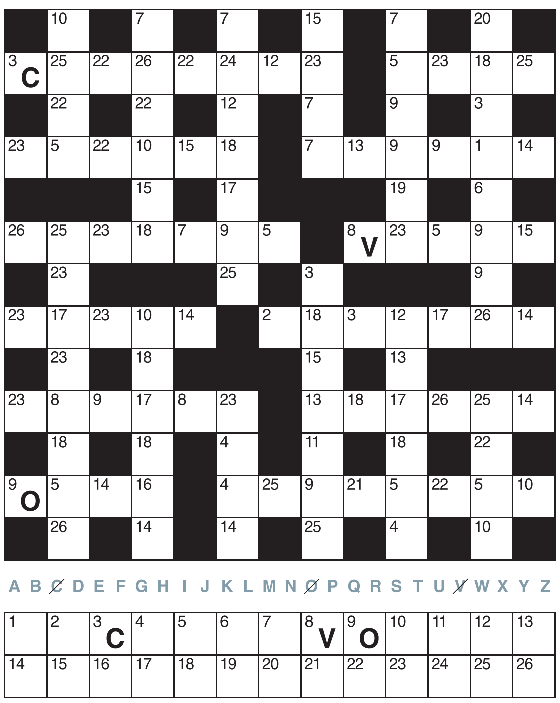


Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Solve Times puzzles interactively with same-day solutions at thetimes.co.uk

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.



Mini Sudoku

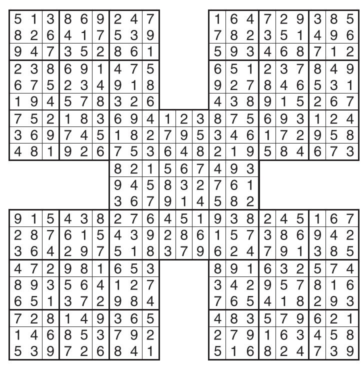
Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

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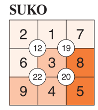
Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

Yesterday's solutions

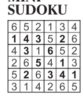
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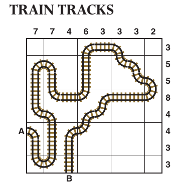
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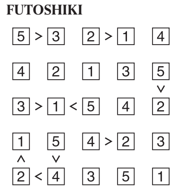
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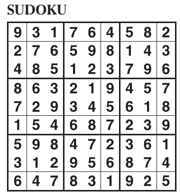
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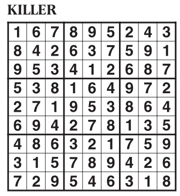
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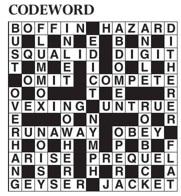
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Baking skills win over banter in a close finale

James Jackson
TV review



Bake Off: The Professionals
Channel 4
★★★★☆

Blue Box: Storyville
BBC4
★★★★★

Often more impressive than their baked creations is the skill of *Bake Off* contestants to stay smiling — laughing merrily! — when the comedy presenter sidles over to them just as they're botching their bavarois. Imagine having Noel Fielding grinning in your ear as your millefeuilles melt and your stress levels reach boiling point? Or indeed Ellie Taylor, the vivacious co-host of **Bake Off: The Professionals**. But last night saw a minor rebellion.

It was the finale, and when Taylor breezed up to Subin to ask whether she was learning things about herself on the show, it was met with a curt "No". Subin, halfway through constructing a tower of citrus pavlovas, continued: "I knew about myself well. I hate people talking to me when I work." Oof! And this was just after serious-faced Daniel had shown that he was in no mood for Taylor's suggestion of a selfie. Well, these guys are professionals.

Subin was no doubt teasing (right, Subin?) and in truth the show was full of overpowering good cheer. With a theme of the Roaring Twenties, there was tootling ragtime music, Taylor did the Charleston and judge Benoit Blin, "our very own Great Gatsby", was on ebullient form, making such outstanding jokes as: "I'm sorry, I don't like it . . . I *love* it!" (Gatsby should sue.)

The bakers' 1920s dessert trollies showcased chiffon pies and baked Alaskas — more 1970s dessert trolley than 1920s, surely? — before a showdown of opulent banquets. The results were works of art, reminding you that *Bake Off: The Professionals* does win over its daddy on one count. Never watch this show hungry.

As such, it mattered little that I couldn't feel that much tension before Daniel and Mauro were named winners, despite Blin declaring it the closest final they'd had. There were no collapsing tiers, or collapsing in tears, although Daniel did manage a smile for the judges. Bravo, maestro!

Quite a contrast was **Blue Box** on BBC4. How do you deal with a moral problem in your family's history? Many would prefer not to dwell on, say, a beloved great-grandfather's role in creating the Israeli-Palestinian crisis. But Michal Weits didn't just read Joseph Weitz's diaries, she confronted her ancestor's actions by making a film, talking to her family about his legacy.

They had been raised with the image of Joseph as a "legend", a dear man who planted the forests of Israel. The truth is more complicated: he was also the "architect of transfer" of the Palestinian people in the early 1940s, his pragmatic view being "there is no room for both peoples together in this country". He was later instrumental in plans to prevent the Arabs returning by destroying their villages.

The history of Weitz was compelling in itself, but more unusual was hearing his descendants' views. It was brave of them to explore their feelings on film: one of them said he had no answer to the issue of the "transfer"; another became a bit testy during his interview with Michal as he felt little good could come from exhuming this past.

Suffice to say, there were so many points of debate cracked open in this elegantly composed film, I can only urge you to seek it out on iPlayer.

MARK BOURDILLON



Benoit Blin was in ebullient form in Bake Off: The Professionals

Radio choice
Ben Dowell



Composer of the Week: Handel
Radio 3, noon

When he arrived in London in 1712, the German-born George Frideric Handel, *above*, was already one of Europe's most exciting musicians. Over the next decades he would transform British musical life, from the opera stage to the choir stalls. All this week Kate Molleson has been telling the stories of five golden evenings of 18th-century music-making showcasing some of his most eventful performances. Today Handel mania hits Oxford, as the composer provides a week of musical entertainments at the university with his new oratorio, *Athalia*.

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television & radio

Viewing Guide
Toby Earle

Mel Giedroyc & Martin Clunes: Explore Britain by the Book
ITV1, 9pm

Top pick

Let's get this out of the way — at no point during this travelogue in Dorset does Mel Giedroyc reprise her *Eurovision*-stealing turn as a suggestive butter-churning milkmaid. As disappointing as this may be, there is plenty to compensate. In other hands a literary tour of Dorset locations that inspired authors could have been dry; with Giedroyc aboard it's a rollercoaster. A travelogue presenter is generally either expert traveller or informed guide. Giedroyc is neither of these, more a semi-chaotic family member who suggested a weekend break. Her freewheeling train of thought has a natural ally in Clunes, an old friend who is often close to laughter throughout their trip. In a show that dives into the works of Thomas Hardy, Enid Blyton and Ian McEwan, you don't expect a conversation about Gwyneth Paltrow's vagina-scented candle. Giedroyc even tires of their trip when nausea kicks in during a boat ride to Durdle Door, leaving Clunes to take centre stage. He's having a whale of a time, and in the film recounts a cracking Peter O'Toole anecdote involving an ear. There is shade, though, to all this light. One book the pair focus on is *The Salt Path* by Raynor Winn, a true story of grief and acceptance. They meet Winn on the path and she reads them an excerpt from the book. It's the sort of moment *Gogglebox* features.

Justified: City Primeval
Disney+

In *Deadwood* Timothy Olyphant played the cowboy Seth Bullock; in *Justified* he played the cowboy Raylan Givens, the difference being Givens is a US marshal in present-day America. Regardless of the century, Olyphant wears a hat well. The neo-western is one of the best series of this century and bottled the essence of its Elmore Leonard source material — heroes and villains have mouths as quick as their hands, a wry joke as likely as a shoot-out. Olyphant is back for a new series — eight years after the last finale — in which Givens hunts for a criminal in Detroit.

BBC1

Early

6.00am Breakfast **9.15** Morning Live. Magazine show **10.00** Critical Incident. A fire crew in Burnley come under attack on the busiest night of the year **10.45** Expert Witness. A forensic linguistic specialist leads the hunt for evidence against a bomber **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer. Dion Dublin is delighted with the quirky original features he finds in a house in Staffordshire (r) (AD) **12.15pm** Bargain Hunt. Teams search for antiques in Leominster, Herefordshire (r) (AD) **1.00** BBC News at One; Weather **1.30** BBC Regional News; Weather **1.45** Doctors. Rosie has a surprising request for Barry, and the Mill staff deal with the events of the previous night (AD) **2.15** Money for Nothing. JJ Chalmers hunts for hidden gems at Wallyford recycling centre **3.00** Escape to the Country. In Devon, Alistair Appleton helps a mother and daughter with £750,000 find a home (r) (AD) **3.45** Garden Rescue. Charlie Dimmock and Chris Hull visit a couple in Stoke on Trent want to turn their garden into a German meadow **4.30** The Finish Line. Quiz contest hosted by Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene **5.15** Pointless. Quiz show hosted by Alexander Armstrong **6.00** BBC News at Six; Weather **6.30** BBC Regional News; Weather

7PM

7.00 The One Show Weekday magazine with Alex Jones and Jermaine Jenas

7.30 EastEnders Ian's business lunch with Suki and Nish does not go to plan. Meanwhile, Sonia and Reiss head to their first fertility appointment (AD)

8PM

8.00 The Repair Shop The experts restore a mantle clock in the shape of a ship, a ceramic night light fractured into dozens of fragments, a 1960s skateboard and a treasured teddy bear that accompanied its owner through life-changing surgery (r) (AD)

9PM

9.00 Celebrity MasterChef The four remaining chefs create a theatrical showstopping dish to decide who will make it to the final three and face the Chef's Table hosted by Robin Gill (AD)

10PM

10.00 BBC News at Ten

10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather

10.40 Ambulance The North West Ambulance Service is alerted about a possible outbreak of the highly infectious Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) at Fairfield General Hospital in Bury (2/6) (r)

11PM

11.40 If Beale Street Could Talk (15, 2018) In early 1970s Harlem, a couple's plans of starting a family are derailed when the fiancé is arrested for a crime they did not commit. Drama starring KiKi Layne, Stephan James and Colman Domingo (AD)

Late

1.35am-6.00 BBC News

BBC2

Early

6.30am Escape to the Country (r) **7.15** Garden Rescue (r) **8.00** Sign Zone: See Hear (SL) **8.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (r) (AD, SL) **9.00** Nicky Campbell **10.00** BBC News **11.15** Politics Live **1.00pm** Impossible. Quiz contest hosted by Rick Edwards (r) **1.45** Eggheads. Quiz show hosted by Jeremy Vine (r) **2.15** Murder, Mystery and My Family. Sasha Wass and Jeremy Dein investigate the mysterious murder of a Yorkshire farm owner in 1933 (r) (AD) **3.00** The Wonder of Animals. How foxes have managed to thrive in a world with an ever-increasing human population (r) (AD) **3.30** Back in Time for the Factory. Time moves on for the volunteers to 1976, a time of great hope for women with both the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act now in force. Presented by Alex Jones (r) (AD) **4.30** Great British Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo continues his trip from Northern Ireland across the water to Scotland. Leaving from the seaport of Larne, he reaches Stranraer and the Mull of Galloway (r) (AD) **5.00** Flog It! An edition featuring collection of finds from various locations around the country, including Lulworth Castle in Dorset, Wrest Park in Bedfordshire and Chiddingstone Castle in Kent (r)

5.45 Live T20 Women's International: England v Sri Lanka Isa Guha presents coverage of the third and final match in the series from the County Ground, Derby. England's side will be buoyant, having won two of the three T20s they played against Australia in the recent Ashes series, which included a memorable victory at Lord's. They now face a Sri Lanka side they last met prior to this series at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. That encounter ended in a victory for the home side, meaning they went into these contests with a 100 per cent record in T20s against the Sri Lankans, with nine wins from nine

10.00 Mock the Week: The History Of.. Some of the topical comedy series' finest moments from the first half of its 17-year history (7/8) (r)

10.30 Newsnight

11.15 Surviving 9/11 The stories of 13 people caught up in the events of September 11, 2001, moving between accounts of the two-hour period when terrorists attacked the Twin Towers and the Pentagon and what has happened in the 20 years since (r) (AD)

12.50am Sign Zone: See Hear A report from Norfolk Deaf Festival (r) (SL) **1.20** Ultimate Wedding Planner. The contenders clash over plans for a multi-themed wedding (r) (AD, SL) **2.20** Garden Rescue. Charlie and Flo go head to head to design a Victorian garden (r) (SL) **3.05-3.35** Celebrity MasterChef (r) (AD, SL)

ITV1

6.00am Good Morning Britain **9.00** Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and celebrity gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly **10.00** This Morning. A mix of celebrity chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather **12.30pm** Loose Women. Another helping of topical studio discussion from a female perspective, featuring celebrity interviews **1.30** ITV News; Weather **1.55** Regional News; Weather **2.00** James Martin's Spanish Adventure. In Bilbao, James visits a huge indoor food market and a famous steak restaurant, before making dishes including squid ink arancini and Basque cheesecake (AD) **3.00** Lingo. Adil Ray hosts the game in which three pairs of contestants use their skills to find words from the fewest letters possible (r) **4.00** Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot **5.00** The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents the quiz contest as four contestants work as a team to take on one of the ruthless Chasers and secure a cash prize **6.00** Regional News; Weather **6.30** ITV News; Weather

7.30 Emmerdale Caleb is amused when Cain ropes him in to help with work at the garage, while Belle is disheartened when her date is interrupted (AD)

8.00 Coronation Street Cassie's relapse destroys Tyrone's faith in her recovery. Elsewhere, Lauren stirs up conflict between Max and Sabrina, while Ronnie presents Ed with a bank card for the business account (AD)

9.00 Mel Giedroyc and Martin Clunes Explore Britain by the Book The acting friends head to the county of Dorset to explore the spectacular scenery and locations made famous by some of Britain's favourite books and films. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 ITV News at Ten

10.30 Regional News

10.45 You & Me Ben and Emma are both forced to weigh up their chances of happiness against the baggage of their pasts, as Ben hopes to confront Jess's ex-lover Josh. Last in the series (r)

11.40 British Touring Car Championship Highlights Action from the 22nd, 23rd and 24th races of the campaign, held at Donington Park in Derby (r)

12.55am The Chase (r) **1.45** Tipping Point (r) **2.40** Next Level Chef. The three remaining chefs compete in the final (r) (AD, SL) **3.30** E-Bikes & Scooters: Trouble on the Road? Tonight. The pros and cons of electric bikes and scooters (r) (SL) **3.50** Unwind with ITV **5.05-6.00** James Martin's Spanish Adventure (r) (AD, SL)

Channel 4

6.05am Countdown. Rick Edwards is in Dictionary Corner (r) **6.45** Cheers (r) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) **8.25** Frasier (r) (AD) **9.55** Château DIY (r) (AD) **10.55** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. A teenager transforms a narrowboat into a floating holiday home (r) (AD) **11.55** Channel 4 News Summary **12.00** Steph's Packed Lunch. Weekday magazine show hosted by Steph McGovern **2.10pm** Countdown. Rick Edwards is in Dictionary Corner **3.00** A Place in the Sun. Craig Rowe helps a man from Suffolk find a holiday home in Abruzzo, Italy (r) **4.00** A Place in the Sun. Ben Hillman helps a Stirlingshire couple find a holiday home in Spain's Costa Calida **5.00** Four in a Bed. The Royal Oak in the Peak District is the third location in the contest (r) **5.30** Come Dine with Me. In Manchester, an entertainment manager serves an Americana-themed evening (r) **6.00** The Simpsons. Lisa gets her hands on a collection of keys to every door in Springfield, and soon uncovers a hidden classroom beneath the school (r) (AD) **6.30** Hollyoaks. Hunter tells Zoe about his past, Norma and Cindy try to track down Ella, and Lizzie confronts her dad about what is going on with Cindy (r) (AD)

7.00 Channel 4 News

8.00 Geordie Hospital New series. Following staff in Newcastle hospitals. An orthopaedic surgeon plans to give a 25-year-old a replacement ankle and a an endovascular surgeon performs surgery on a 79-year-old's aneurysm. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

9.00 Screw Leigh is reeling after a corrupt officer is discovered on her team and an accident in the prison workshop leads the inmates to going on strike. Meanwhile, Rose is faced with a terrifying decision and Jackie makes a confession to Gary (3/6) (AD)

10.00 First Dates A Disney fan seeks a fresh start after losing her last partner due to a tragic accident, while a 27-year-old man wants to find a man who will share his love of dogs, and a retired Butlins redcoat has high hopes for her date (2/5) (r) (AD)

11.05 Selling Super Houses After mixed results in the first challenge, the contestants are given a second chance to prove themselves as they conduct a house tour at a mansion owned by the singer Boy George (2/6) (r) (AD)

12.05am Remarkable Places to Eat Exploring Burgundy (r) (AD) **1.00** Alone (r) (AD) **1.55** Ukraine: Holocaust Ground Zero (r) (AD, SL) **2.50** Bone Detectives: Britain's Buried Secrets (r) (AD) **3.45** Location, Location, Location (r) (SL) **4.40** Undercover Boss USA (r) **5.30** Jamie's Comfort Food (r) **5.35-6.05** Beat the Chef (r)

Channel 5

6.00am Milkshake! **9.15** Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster and guests discuss the issues of the day with co-host Storm Huntley joining him for phone-ins and reading out viewers' correspondence **11.15** Storm Huntley. Debate on the day's talking points continues with Storm Huntley, who takes viewers calls on the biggest stories **12.40pm** Alexis Conran. The actor, writer and broadcaster examines the important stories of the day **1.40** 5 News at Lunchtime **1.45** Home and Away. Felicity and Tane are running out of time and ideas as they try to come up with the blackmailer's cash. Alf welcomes John back with a wise word (r) (AD) **2.15 FILM: My Mother's Secret (PG, TVM, 2019)** Soon after meeting her long-lost biological mother, Ashley finds herself caught in a web of lies and deceit. Drama starring Nia Roam and Laurie Fortier **4.00** The Cruise: Fun-Loving Brits at Sea. The holiday-makers spend a full day on the ship, and decide to throw themselves into the ship's schedule of activities **5.00** 5 News at 5 **6.00** Susan Calman's Grand Day Out. The comedian's second run of excursions begins on the Norfolk Broads, where she is invited aboard a beautifully restored boat known as a wherry (r) **6.55** 5 News Update

7.00 Into the Grand Canyon with Nick Knowles (1/2) The presenter adventures through the Grand Canyon, examining the mile-deep chasm from every vantage point and exploring the caves 21 storeys below the surface (r)

7.55 5 News Update

8.00 Norfolk and Suffolk: Country & Coast New series. Celebrating the beauty of Norfolk and Suffolk. Cameras follow a skipper of the last of the Cromer crab boats in Norfolk, and a trader in the Suffolk town of Sudbury. *See Viewing Guide* (1/6)

9.00 James Bulger: The Trial The story of the 1993 trial of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, the two 10-year-old killers of toddler James Bulger. Using first-hand testimony of those who were in the courtroom, this documentary reveals the prosecution's strategy to prove that both boys were as guilty as each other. With contributions from the prosecution and defence teams, and James Bulger's mother. *See Viewing Guide*

10.30 999: Critical Condition A woman collapses unexpectedly during a day out with her family, and is left unable to move or walk. The trauma team leader diagnoses a bleed on her brain requiring urgent surgery (6/8) (r)

11.25 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders A PC attempts to catch up to a vehicle with cloned plates on the M56 and manages to pull the suspect over for questioning (5/10) (r)

12.25am Shoplifters & Scammers: At War with the Law (r) **1.25** Live Casino Show **3.25** Wild Animal Rescue (r) **4.15** Britain's Great Cathedrals with Tony Robinson (r) (SL) **5.05** House Doctor (r) (SL) **5.30** Entertainment News on 5 **5.40** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** Paw Patrol (r)

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television & radio

Geordie Hospital
Channel 4, 8pm

The title of this observational documentary may summon memories of Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer's Geordie sketches from *Shooting Stars*. Even though this isn't a Reeves & Mortimer product, the staff and patients lend plenty of humour to these medical stories. Among the cases is a tricky aneurysm for the endovascular surgeon Craig (who describes himself as a "plumber") and a mother's early induction for the midwife Titi, whose mum worked as a midwife in Nigeria. So far Titi estimates she's cared for a thousand mums — and all their nervous birth partners.

Norfolk and Suffolk: Country and Coast
Channel 5, 8pm

Ancient traditions and long-standing professions feature in the first part of this new documentary series, narrated by Bill Nighy. For instance, five generations of the Church family have taken passengers across the River Blyth in Suffolk and put up with people singing "Row, row, row your boat" as if they were the first to make that joke. Food plays a big part too, with a trip to Cromer, where the fisherman Richard Mathews hopes his catch is the only reason a wedding reception at his restaurant that night is crabby.

James Bulger: The Trial
Channel 5, 9pm

This November it will be 30 years since Jon Venables and Robert Thompson stood trial for the murder of the toddler James Bulger. The nation was chilled when a pair of ten-year-olds were arrested for the crime. Contributors to this reconstruction of the trial, which uses court transcripts and police audio, include Denise Fergus, James's mother, the defence solicitors Dominic Lloyd and Laurence Lee, the prosecution barrister Henry Globe, and the jury foreman Alan Barry. There are harrowing details, and the fight for James is still far from over for Fergus.

Fisherman's Friends
Film4, 9pm

A formulaic but hit true-life tale of Cornish fishermen turned pop stars. Set mostly in Port Isaac in 2010, it follows a flash London music executive (Daniel Mays) whose life is changed when he meets a shanty-singing "buoy band". (12, 107min)

Sky Max

6.00am Supergirl (r) **7.00** DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD) **8.00** The Flash (r) **9.00** Stargate Atlantis (r) **11.00** Supergirl (r) **12.00** The Flash (r) **1.00pm** NCIS: Los Angeles (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T (r) (AD) **5.00** DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD) **6.00** Stargate Atlantis. Ronon is captured by Tyre, who plans to give him to the Wraith (r) **7.00** Stargate Atlantis. A copy of the Daedalus appears in orbit over the Atlantis (r) **8.00** An Idiot Abroad. Karl Pilkington embarks on a trek to Machu Picchu in Peru (r) (AD) **9.00** Never Mind the Buzzcocks. With panellists Sam Campbell, Calum Scott and CMAT (r) **9.45 FILM: Homefront (15, 2013)** A former drug enforcement agent is drawn into a conflict with a gangster. Thriller starring Jason Statham **11.45** COBRA: Cyberwar. An unseen enemy strikes from the shadows (1/6) (r) (AD) **12.45am** Strike Back: Retribution (r) (AD) **1.45** Road Wars (r) **2.15** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.05** S.W.A.T (r) (AD) **5.00** Highway Patrol (r) (AD)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) **7.55** The Leftovers (r) (AD) **10.05** Ray Donovan (r) (AD) **12.15pm** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **1.25** Irma Vep (r) **3.25** The Leftovers. Double bill (r) (AD) **5.40** Ray Donovan. Ray sends Avi to Boston to gather evidence against Mickey (r) (AD) **6.45** Ray Donovan. Mickey goes to Palm Springs to be reunited with an ex-girlfriend (r) (AD) **7.50** Game of Thrones. Jon Snow finds himself on trial at Castle Black, while Daenerys heads toward the slave city of Meereen (r) (AD) **9.00** Billions. Chuck embarks on a case with ties to Prince, and Wendy seeks guidance (4/12) (r) **10.10** True Detective. Cohle and Hart finally encounter the scarred man (8/8) (r) (AD) **11.20** Drift — Partners in Crime. Maryam receives an anonymous threat (4/10) (r) **12.20am** Das Boot (r) **1.30** Dreamland (r) (AD) **2.00** The Lovers. New series. Comedy drama starring Johnny Flynn, Roisin Gallagher and Alice Eve (AD) **2.40** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **3.45** In Treatment (r) **4.15** Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Nineties (r) **7.00** Discovering: Jodie Foster (r) **8.00** The Directors (r) **9.00** Devil's Advocate: The Mostly True Story of Giovanni Di Stefano (r) (AD) **9.55** The Vietnam War (r) **11.00** 100 Foot Wave (r) (AD) **12.00** Being Mary Tyler Moore (r) **2.20pm** Cured (r) **4.00** The Directors (r) **5.00** Discovering: Jodie Foster. The life and career of the actress (r) **6.00** Devil's Advocate: The Mostly True Story of Giovanni Di Stefano. Documentary telling the story of the bogus lawyer (r) (AD) **6.55** The Vietnam War. Lyndon Johnson escalates America's military commitment (r) **8.00** 100 Foot Wave. Brazilian surfers new to Nazare fail to heed safety advice (3/6) (r) (AD) **9.00** Hatton. Documentary looking at the life and career of former boxer Ricky Hatton (r) **11.00** Mission to Burnley (4/4) (r) (AD) **12.00** The Golden Boy: Oscar De La Hoya. Profile of the boxer (r) **3.00am** A Crime on the Bayou (r) (AD) **4.50** My Icon: Leon Pryce (r) (AD) **5.00** Discovering: Jodie Foster (r)

Sky Arts

6.00am Arts Uncovered **6.15** Cirque du Soleil: Luzia **8.00** The Joy of Painting **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** Discovering: Robert De Niro **12.00** The Joy of Painting **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **2.00** Landscape Artist of the Year Canada **3.00** Classic Movies: The Story of The Third Man **4.00** Discovering: Alain Delon **5.00** Tales of the Unexpected **6.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.00** The Joy of Painting. Double bill **8.00** The Directors. The life and work of the "Master of Suspense" Alfred Hitchcock (AD) **9.00** Decoding Turner. An analysis of possible hidden codes in the work of JMW Turner **11.00** David Hockney: A Celebration. Documentary profile of the artist, featuring interviews with him and footage of him at work **12.30am** Patrick Melrose. Patrick and his family visit his ailing mother (AD) **1.45** Sky Comedy Shorts **3.15** Laurel and Hardy: Their Lives and Magic (AD) **5.00** The South Bank Show Originals

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **10.00** The Football Show **12.00** Sky Lunchtime Live **12.30pm** Live Disability Premier League Final. Coverage of the showpiece cricket match which is staged at the County Cricket Ground in Derby **4.00** Live US Open Tennis. Coverage of day 10 of the event staged at Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre at Flushing Meadows in New York, featuring quarter-final matches. Should reigning ladies champion Iga Swiatek have reached this stage, she stands a good chance of joining an elite list of players who have won this Grand Slam event on more than one occasion **12.00** Live US Open Tennis. Further live coverage of day 10 from Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre, featuring quarter-final matches **2.30am** Live US Open Tennis. Concluding coverage of day 10 at Flushing Meadows **5.30** US Open Tennis Classic Matches. A chance to see highlights of Andy Roddick v Juan Carlos Ferrero in the 2003 men's final

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TalkTV

6.00am James Max. An initial insight into the day's top stories **6.30** The Julia Hartley-Brewer Breakfast Show. All the stories you need to know to start your day **9.30** Mike and Kev. Mike Graham and Kevin O'Sullivan give their take on the front pages **10.00** The Independent Republic of Mike Graham. The host looks through the morning papers **1.00pm** Ian Collins. Monologues and debates **3.00** Kevin O'Sullivan. The host tackles the big stories of the day **5.00** Vanessa Feltz. Exclusive interviews, and viewers' thoughts on what has got the nation talking **7.00** Jeremy Kyle Live. The straight-talking host takes on the issues that really matter **8.00** Piers Morgan Uncensored. The host presents his verdict on the day's global events **9.00** The Talk. A panel of famous faces debate the latest topics everybody is talking about **10.00** First Edition. An energetic look at the first editions of tomorrow's newspapers **11.00** Piers Morgan Uncensored **12.00** Petrie Hosken. The latest news stories overnight **1.00am** Jeremy Kyle Live **2.00** Kevin O'Sullivan **3.00** Piers Morgan Uncensored **4.00** The Talk **5.00** James Max. The day's top stories

BBC4

7.00pm Great Coastal Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo continues his exploration of Scotland's spectacular west coast (AD) **7.30** Climbing Great Buildings. Jonathan Foyle examines Burghley House in Lincolnshire (AD) **8.00** Caligula with Mary Beard. The classical scholar attempts to peel away some of the myths surrounding the Roman emperor (AD) **9.00** Colosseum. Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius, steps out of the Imperial Box and onto the sands of the arena (7/8) **9.50** Colosseum. With Rome and the Colosseum in decline, a single man turns to the arena. Last in the series **10.35** I, Claudius. The Praetorian Guard hold Claudius under protective custody as the Senate debates the return of the Republic (10/12) **11.30** I, Claudius. As Claudius continues his conquest of Britain, Messalina runs wild with lust and begins a rebellion of her own (11/12) **12.20am** I, Claudius. As he nears the end of his years, Claudius is urged to re-marry. Last in the series **1.15** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (AD) **1.45** Caligula with Mary Beard (AD, SL) **2.45-3.45** The Riviera: A History in Pictures

Talking Pictures

6.00am The Detectives (b/w) **7.00 FILM: Profile (PG, 1954)** (b/w) **8.20** Twist or Stick **8.45 FILM: Echo of Diana (U, 1963)** (b/w) **10.00** Together **10.35 FILM: The Strange Love of Martha Ivers (U, 1946)** (b/w) **12.55pm FILM: The Body Vanished (PG, 1939)** (b/w) **1.55** Glimpses **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **3.00** Saddle Up **3.05 FILM: Stagecoach (PG, 1966)** Western starring Bing Crosby **5.25** Saddle Up **5.30** Johnny Ringo **6.00** For the Love of Ada. Sitcom **6.35 FILM: Bulldog Drummond Comes Back (U, 1937)** Adventure sequel starring John Howard and John Barrymore (b/w) **7.45** Look at Life. Britain's industrial output **8.00** Public Eye. With Alfred Burke **9.05 FILM: Murphy's Law (18, 1986)** Thriller starring Charles Bronson **11.10 FILM: The Chase (15, 1966)** Drama starring Marlon Brando and Robert Redford **1.50am FILM: A Private Function (15, 1984)** Comedy starring Michael Palin and Alison Steadman **3.40 FILM: The Party's Over (12, 1965)** Drama starring Oliver Reed (b/w) **5.30 FILM: Another Fine Mess (U, 1930)** (b/w)

Film4

11.00am The Long Arm (U, 1956) Crime thriller starring Jack Hawkins (b/w) (AD) **12.55pm The Far Country (U, 1954)** Western starring James Stewart (AD) **2.55 Father Goose (U, 1964)** Comedy drama with Cary Grant, Leslie Caron and Trevor Howard (AD) **5.15 The Swimmer (PG, 1968)** Cult drama starring Burt Lancaster and Kim Hunter (AD) **7.10 Pitch Perfect 3 (12, 2017)** Following their win at the world championship, the Bellas reunite for one last singing competition at an overseas tour. Comedy sequel starring Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson and Anna Camp (AD) **9.00 Fisherman's Friends (12, 2019)** Ten Cornish fishermen are signed by a record label and pursue a top ten hit with their album "*Sea Shanties*". Comedy with James Purefoy, Meadow Nobrega and David Hayman. *See Viewing Guide* **11.15 Hancock (12, 2008)** A PR executive decides to transform the image of a drunken superhero whose careless crime-fighting often does more harm than good. Comedy starring Will Smith, Jason Bateman and Charlize Theron (AD) **1.05am-3.20 Patti Cake$ (15, 2017)** Drama starring Danielle Macdonald (AD)

More4

8.55am Kirstie's House of Craft **9.15** A Place in the Sun **10.05** A New Life in the Sun **11.05** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (AD) **1.10pm** Heir Hunters **2.10** Four in a Bed **4.50** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It (AD) **5.50** The Secret Life of the Zoo. A new mandrill monkey arrives at the zoo (AD) **6.55** The Dog House. In this edition, an eight-stone Newfoundland makes a favourable first impression on one family (AD) **7.55** Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud revisits an amphibious house built on a small island on the Thames in Buckinghamshire, to discover how well the floating house performs (8/9) (AD) **9.00** The Duchess and Her Magical Kingdom. With the Lilidorei project on hold, the Duchess face a packed winter schedule (3/6) (AD) **10.00** The Royals: A History of Scandals. Investigating some of the most notorious cold cases involving royals from the past (AD) **11.05** 24 Hours in A&E. This edition focuses on the treatment of sport enthusiasts who have had accidents on two wheels (2/8) (AD) **12.05am** The Duchess and Her Magical Kingdom (AD) **1.10** 999: On the Front Line **2.15** 24 Hours in A&E (AD) **3.20-3.50** A Place in the Sun

ITV2

6.00am CITV **9.00** One Tree Hill **10.00** Dawson's Creek **11.00** Love Bites (AD, SL) **12.00** Dinner Date (AD) **1.00pm** Family Fortunes **2.00** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dinner Date (AD) **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) **7.00** Family Fortunes. Game show **8.00** Superstore. Glenn resolves to teach Amy everything he knows about management (AD) **8.30** Superstore. Amy and Cheyenne attend Cloud 9 Academy to advance their careers (AD) **9.00** You & Me. Ben and Emma weigh up their chances of happiness. Last in the series (AD) **10.00** Shopping with Keith Lemon. Keith shops with *Strictly Come Dancing* judge Craig Revel Horwood, and pop star and presenter Fleur East **10.30** Family Guy. Chris gets teased at school for his budget-brand trainers (AD) **11.00** Family Guy. Animated comedy (AD) **11.30** American Dad! Animation (AD) **12.00** American Dad! (AD) **12.30am** Superstore (AD) **1.30** The Stand Up Sketch Show **2.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping **5.00** CITV

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale **7.05** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **8.10** On the Buses **9.15** Where the Heart Is (AD) **11.35** Heartbeat (AD) **1.40pm** Classic Emmerdale **2.40** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **3.55** Endeavour (AD) **5.55** Heartbeat. The coppers try to catch the culprits behind a spate of sheep rustling (AD) **6.55** Heartbeat. A woman is involved in a hit-and-run following a local dance (AD) **8.00** Lewis. A housewife found hanged in her home is believed to have committed suicide, but a meeting with a law professor leads Lewis to suspect something more sinister (3/3) (AD) **10.00** Manhunt The Night Stalker. With absolutely no guarantee it will work, the Force Tasking Group have to come to a decision about funding Colin's high stakes gamble (3/4) (AD) **11.05** The Suspect. Joe believes that there is a pattern to be found amongst all the coincidences and a breakthrough sets him on a new path of investigation, while Ruiz and Devi's own enquiries have hit a roadblock (3/5) (AD) **12.10am** Where the Heart Is (SL) **2.20** Unwind with ITV **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am World of Sport **6.05** The Protectors (SL) **6.40** Minder (AD, SL) **7.40** The Professionals (AD, SL) **8.45** The Saint **9.50** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (AD) **11.00** Live Cycling: Tour of Britain Live. Coverage of stage four, featuring a 166.6km route from Sherwood Forest to Newark-on-Trent **4.00pm** The Derby Through the Years **4.20** Made in Britain (AD) **4.50** Minder (AD) **5.55** The Motorbike Show **7.00** Rugby World Cup's Greatest Tries. Some of the tournament's most memorable tries **8.00** Cycling: Tour of Britain Highlights. Action from stage four of the prestigious race **9.00 FILM: Rocky Balboa (12, 2006)** The ageing fighter contemplates a return to the ring when a computer simulation reveals he would have defeated the current world heavyweight champion Mason "The Line" Dixon, who responds by challenging Rocky to face him for real. Drama sequel with Sylvester Stallone (AD) **11.10** All Elite Wrestling: Collision. Hard-hitting, high-flying grappling action **1.15am** Minder (AD, SL) **2.10** The Protectors (SL) **2.40** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.05** Pie in the Sky **7.55** Doctors **9.10** Classic Holby City **10.30** Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.40pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** Pie in the Sky **3.00** Lovejoy **4.10** Peak Practice **5.20** The Upper Hand **5.55** 'Allo 'Allo! Rene, Hans and the Colonel are interrogated by Gestapo officer Herr Flick **6.40** Last of the Summer Wine. A reluctant Clegg is persuaded to deliver a note to Marin **7.20** Last of the Summer Wine. Seymour takes it upon himself to supervise repairs to a boat **8.00** Kingdom. Peter attempts to help a family avoid accusations of paedophilia over the issue of recording a school concert (5/6) **9.00** Maisie Raine. Maisie tries to rescue a man in debt to a pair of crooks (5/6) (AD) **10.00** New Tricks. The detectives reinvestigate a 30-year-old heist, but their future is threatened by allegations that a high-ranking officer was involved in the crime (10/10) (AD) **11.20** Silent Witness. A death is linked to the disappearance of a teenager (AD) **1.50am** Detectorists. Comedy (AD) **2.35** Classic Holby City (SL) **4.00** Teleshopping

Yesterday

6.10am Shipwreck Secrets **7.10** Underground Worlds (AD) **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **10.00** Secret Nazi Bases **11.00** Narrow Escapes of World War II (AD) **12.00** Great Continental Railway Journeys **1.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **4.00** Narrow Escapes of World War II (AD) **5.00** Secret Nazi Bases **6.00** Great British Railway Journeys **7.00** Bangers & Cash. An Aston Martin DB6 looks set to break the auction record (4/10) **8.00** Great American Railroad Journeys. Michael Portillo pays homage to Rocky in Philadelphia and visits the Civil War battlefield Gettysburg **9.00** Ireland with Simon Reeve. (1/2) Simon travels along the coast, joining the thousands who try to climb the mountain of Croagh Patrick **10.00** Bangers & Cash. Derek collects a restored 1936 Wolseley 14/56, and a Batman-inspired Chrysler Crossfire is dropped off (AD) **11.00** Abandoned Engineering. Ruins hiding in the forested hills of Arkansas, USA (9/12) (AD) **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys. Double bill of the series **1.00am** Shipwreck Secrets **2.00** Sounds of the Seventies **3.00** Teleshopping

Variations

BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: 2.15pm Politics Scotland. A round-up of political news **3.00-3.45** Money for Nothing. JJ Chalmers hunts for hidden gems at Wallyford recycling centre **11.40** The Edit. With Lauren Lyle and Lorne MacFadyen (r) **11.55** FILM: If Beale Street Could Talk (2018) Drama starring KiKi Layne, Stephan James and Colman Domingo (AD) **1.45am** Weather for the Week Ahead **1.50-6.00** BBC News

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: 10.40pm-11.40 Being Louis Rees-Zammit. Documentary offering access to rugby's new superstar, playing for club and country and at home with his family

BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: 10.00pm-10.30 Henpocalypse! Chief bridesmaid Shelly makes a shocking discovery that could ruin everything for the hens, but she finds an ally in Veena and comes up with a drastic plan of action (AD)

STV
As ITV1 except: 10.30pm STV News **10.40** Scotland Tonight. Current affairs show **11.05** You & Me. Ben and aspiring actress Emma meet through work (r) **12.00-1.45** All Elite Wrestling: Dynamite. Hard-hitting action (r) **3.50am-5.05** Night Vision. The latest news, sport and weather from across Scotland

BBC Scotland
7.00pm Scotland Sings (r) **8.00** Life on the Bay (r) **8.30** Scotland's Home of the Year. Houses in Argyll and the west of Scotland (r) (AD) **9.00** The Nine **10.00** Tuned In: 100 Years of Scottish Broadcasting. A look at how BBC Scotland has changed over the past 100 years (r) **11.00** Eat the Town (r) **11.30-12.00** The Disasters That Shocked Scotland (r)

BBC Alba
6.00am Alba Today **5.00pm** Nannag a' Noo/ Huggleboo (r) **5.10** Bing (r) **5.15** 'S E Iasg a Th'Annam (I'm a Fish) (r) **5.20** Rita is Crogall (r) **5.25** Lon le Linda (r) **5.40** Abadas (r) **5.50** Stòiridh **5.55** Ronia, Nighean a' Mheirlich/ Ronja, the Robber's Daughter (r) **6.20** Bogaisean is Gumbalan/Bottersnikes and Gumbles (r) **6.40** Na Dana-thursan aig Tintin/ The Adventures of Tintin (r) **7.00** Na Drobhairean (Scottish History) (r) **7.30** SpeakGaelic. Joy Dunlop guides viewers through the first steps of speaking Gaelic (r) **8.00** An Là (News) **8.30** Na Tiristich (From Tiree with Love). Tiree musicians take centre stage (r) **9.00** Iùl a' Chiùil (The Musical Path) (r) **10.00** Orain Oir (r) **10.25** Pròis Tartan (Tartan Pride) (r) **11.25** Bannan (The Ties That Bind) (r) **12.00-6.00am** Alba Today

S4C
6.00am Cyw: Blociau Rhif (r) **6.05** Fferm Fach (r) **6.20** Octonots (r) **6.35** Shwshaswyn (r) **6.45** Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) **7.00** Timpo (r) **7.10** Dreigiau Cadi **7.20** Jamborî (r) **7.30** Crawc a'i Ffrindiau **7.45** Cacamwnci (r) **8.00** Sali Mali (r) **8.05** Digbi Draig (r) **8.20** Hafod Haul (r) **8.35** Twt (r) **8.45** Ysbyty Cyw Bach (r) **9.00** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **9.10** Cymylaubychain (r) **9.20** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **9.30** Patrôl Pawennau (r) **9.45** Deian a Loli (r) **10.00** Timpo (r) **10.10** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **10.20** Jamborî (r) **10.30** Crawc a'i Ffrindiau (r) **10.45** Cacamwnci (r) **11.00** Dysgu Gyda Cyw: Nos Da Cyw (r) **11.05** Jen a Jim a'r Cywiadur (r) **11.20** Octonots (r) **11.35** Sblij a Sbloj (r) **11.45** Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) **12.00** News; Weather **12.05pm** Cymry ar Gynfas (r) **12.30** Heno (r) **1.00** Dau Gi Bach (r) (AD) **1.30** Garddio a Mwy (r) **2.00** News; Weather **2.05** Prynhawn Da **3.00** News; Weather **3.05** Stori'r Iaith (r) **4.00** Awr Fawr: Caru Canu (r) **4.05** Stiw (r) **4.20** Jamborî (r) **4.30** Patrôl Pawennau (r) **4.45** Ahoi! (r) **5.00** Stwnsh: Byd Rwtsh Dai Potsh (r) **5.15** Bwystfil (r) **5.25** Prosiect Z (r) **5.50** News Ni **6.00** Ceffylau Cymru (r) **6.57** News **7.00** Heno **7.30** News; Weather **8.00** Pobol y Cwm (AD) **8.25** Dan Do. New series. A look at tasteful and interesting homes across Wales **8.55** News; Weather **9.00** Anfamol **9.30** Sgorio Rhyngwladol: Uefa Euro 2024. A look ahead to Wales's forthcoming fixtures **10.00** Seiclo: Vuelta a España **10.30** Hyd y Pwrs (r) **11.00-12.05am** Cwpan Rygbi'r Byd Shane ac Ieuan (r)

MindGames

Poker Byron Jacobs

Aggression

If you are keen to improve your poker and absorb plenty of coaching material you will probably be told endlessly that in order to win you must "play aggressively". What is often left out is exactly how you are supposed to magically weave aggression into your game, as this is not at all obvious or easy to do.

In order to unpick this problem let's start, like Julie Andrews, at the very beginning. Players new to the game usually tend to be fairly passive. They generally fold bad hands, check or call with moderate/speculative hands and bet or raise with strong hands. This is all very logical and isn't by any means terrible. However, after a while the sophisticated players pick up on this and react accordingly. Before long Hero realises that every time they have a big hand and bet hard, everyone else runs for cover. Having noticed that Hero emerges from their shell only when they have a powerful holding, the Villains can easily moderate their response.

Hero soon notices this is not ideal as they are now finding it difficult to win much money with their strong hands. They realise they need to adjust to become more deceptive; almost everyone on their poker journey now does the same thing. They start playing all their hands passively, including the really strong ones, as a kind of rope-a-dope strategy. They disguise their strong hands by playing them as though they were moderate. This is known as *betting merged*, as Hero has merged how they play their strong and their moderate hands. They hope their passive play will lure Villains into playing aggressively and, in effect, betting their hand for them.

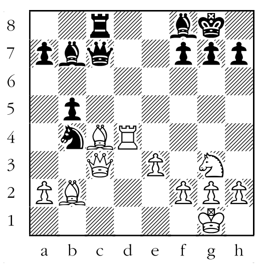
This is better but it suffers from a drawback. Very strong hands are few and far between. When you are fortunate enough to get one you really want to bet it hard yourself and not just hope your opponent does it for you. The merging strategy is the right idea but the execution is wrong. Instead of dumping strong hands in with moderate hands and playing the whole lot passively, Hero should instead be finding moderate hands they can merge with their strong hands and then bet all of these hard. This is the "playing aggressively" that is so often touted as correct poker strategy but rarely explained.

Do this and, sooner or later, the Villains will realise you don't always have the goods when you bomb the pot. They can no longer simply fold every time you bet hard as this will allow you to run over them. Of course sometimes you will be found out but the (considerable) upside is that when you have a big hand you will often get paid off. As the old saying goes: you have to give action in order to get action.

So, how do you choose which weaker hands to merge with your strong range? More next week.

For more puzzles, including Mini Sudoku, extra Codeword, Train Tracks and Futoshiki go to page 10

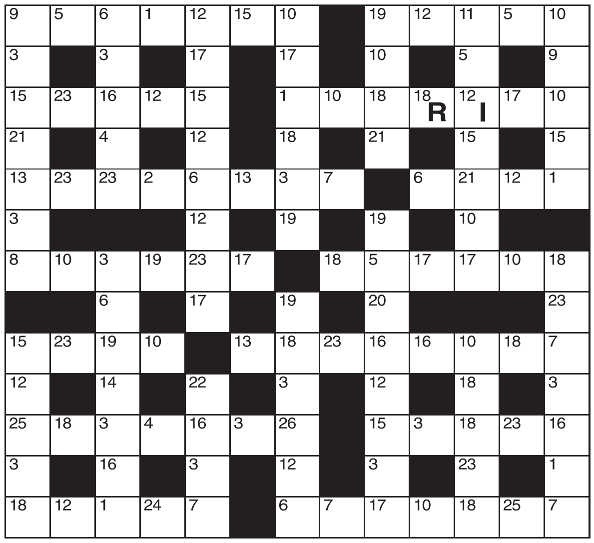
Winning Move



White to play.
This position is from Ardila-Novik, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2023.

A recent puzzle (given on August 15) identified the concept of "Horwitz bishops". These are bishops placed on adjacent diagonals that threaten the opponent's king. White has such bishops here and the pressure is amplified by the presence of the queen on c3. Unsurprisingly, White has a quick kill. How?

Codeword No 4999

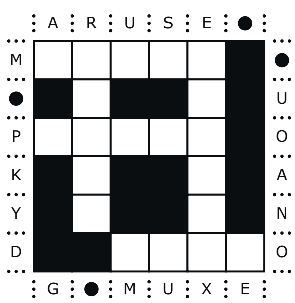


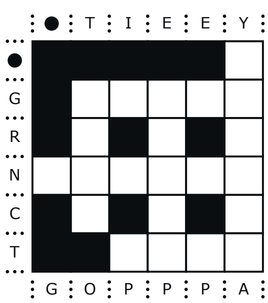


Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Yesterday's solution, right*

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

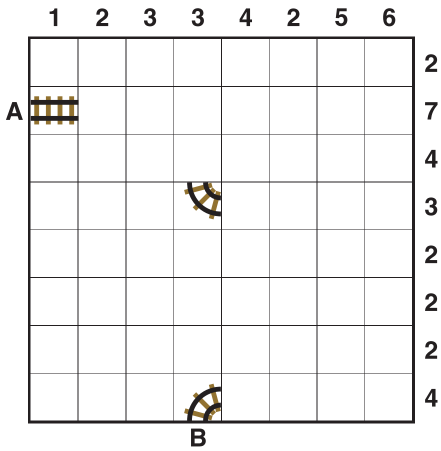
Lexica No 7035 No 7036





Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2033



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram®

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Get rid of tree house in the end (4)

_ _ _ _

2 Smelly cafe tidied partially (5)

_ _ _ _ _

3 Burning muscle? Take it easy! (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

4 Insect getting stuck into vanilla and banana (8)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

5 Student drunk local gin without ice ultimately (9)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

A	A	A	A	A	B	C	D
E	E	E	E	F	F	G	I
I	I	I	L	L	L	L	N
N	N	O	P	R	T	T	Z

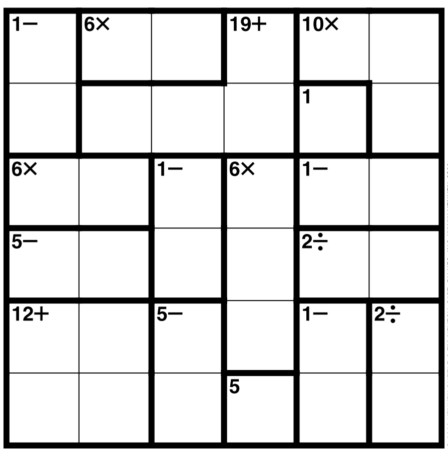
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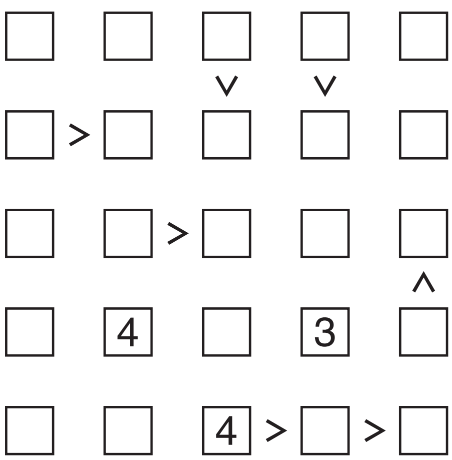
What are your favourite puzzles in MindGames?
Email: puzzles@thetimes.co.uk

KenKen Medium No 5991



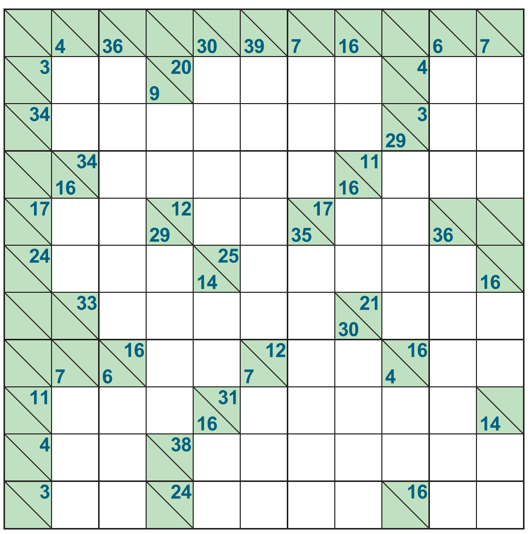
All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 4558



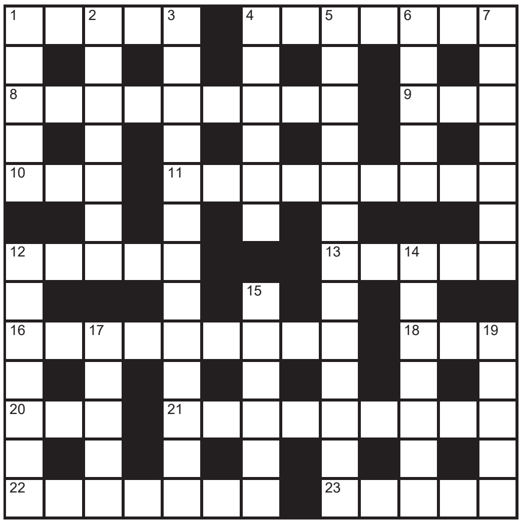
Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3517



Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

times2 Crossword No 9315



Across
1 Exceptionally large thing (5)
4 High-pitched mouse calls (7)
8 Follower of John Wesley (9)
9 Fury (3)
10 Up to this point (3)
11 Refinement in speech (9)
12 Low point (5)
13 Occasions (5)
16 Southwestern US state (3,6)
18 Snooker implement (3)
20 Fall or trail behind (3)
21 Bedfordshire town (9)
22 Scattered (droplets) (7)
23 Amount produced (5)

Down
1 Nervous, on edge (5)
2 Underwent a genetic alteration (7)
3 Free of CFCs and similarly harmful gases (5-8)
4 Tap attached to a cask (6)
5 Of suspect reliability (13)
6 Birdlike (5)
7 SI unit of conductance (7)
12 Flummox, confound (7)
14 Gory, morbid (7)
15 Autographed (6)
17 Bet (5)
19 Correct and revise (text) (5)

Solution to Crossword 9314

S	T	R	I	P	E	S		C	L	O	V	E
H		A		A		T		I		V		M
E	X	P	E	L		R	I	V	I	E	R	A
E				E		U		I		R		N
P	R	A	C	T	I	C	A	L		S	P	A
		M		T		K				T		T
B	R	A	Z	E	N		O	F	L	A	T	E
O		Z				T		L		T		
O	D	E		B	L	A	M	E	L	E	S	S
R		M		R		N		A				H
I	C	E	L	A	N	D		P	O	L	K	A
S		N		S		E		I		E		N
H	I	T	C	H		M	A	T	T	O	C	K

Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

Top Tens
B. Declarer
4. Start Suit Establishing early
(iii) Fun entry-creating plays

Plan the play in 4♥ on ♣Q lead.

North: ♠ A8532 ♥ KJ6 ♦ 964 ♣ 64
West: ♠ J96 ♥ 954 ♦ AQ3 ♣ QJ85
East: ♠ KQ107 ♥ - ♦ K1052 ♣ K10973
South: ♠ 4 ♥ AQ108732 ♦ J87 ♣ A2

You win ♣A (East encouraging with the ♣10) and count nine winners. Needing to set up the fifth spade, you have the necessary four dummy entries (three spade ruffs and an entry to return to dummy at the end) only if you can use ♥6 as an entry.

At trick two, lead ♠4 to ♠A and ruff ♠2 with ♥7 (or above). Lead ♥8 (or above) to ♥J, and note East discarding to reveal the 3-0 split (at least it is West who holds ♥954 — you'd not be able to reach dummy's ♥6 if East held ♥954).

Ruff ♠3 with ♥10 (or above) and now lead ♥2. If you didn't have both ♥2 and ♥3 at this point, West could scupper you by rising with ♥9. However, West can do you no damage as you've retained ♥2 and ♥3. Say West plays ♥5; you now finesse dummy's ♥6. You ruff ♠5 with ♥Q (or ♥A), and can lead ♥3 to (♥9 and) ♥K then triumphantly cash ♠9, your tenth winner. Game made.

Dealer: North, Vulnerability: Neither

North: ♠ AJ2 ♥ 8753 ♦ K ♣ A7542
West: ♠ 54 ♥ Q104 ♦ QJ1043 ♣ Q93
East: ♠ 3 ♥ KJ6 ♦ 98652 ♣ KJ108
South: ♠ KQ109876 ♥ A92 ♦ A7 ♣ 6

S	W	N	E
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠ (1)	Pass
4NT(2)	Pass	5♥ (3)	Pass
5NT(4)	Pass	6♠ (5)	End

(1) Much better than 2♣ (ugh) or 2♥ (big ugh).
(2) Roman Key Card Blackwood.
(3) Two "aces" (incl ♠K); no ♠Q.
(4) Grand slam try announcing all the key cards. I think the best system of replies to 5NT is for partner to bid Seven with a trick source, and sign off in Six when they don't fancy Seven. If they're not sure, they can bid a working king.
(5) Doesn't fancy 7♠ with such a barren collection.

Plan the play in 6♠ on ♦Q lead.

You have 11 winners and need to set up a long club. Win ♦K, cash ♣A and ruff ♣2. Cross to ♠J (both following to reveal the necessary 2-1 split) and ruff ♣4 (both following to reveal the necessary 4-3 split). Cross to ♠A and ruff ♣5.

You have established dummy's ♣7 but dummy's remaining spade is the lowly deuce. How can you reach dummy to enjoy ♣7.

You must ruff your ♦A (key play). You can now cash ♣7 shedding ♥2, and concede only ♥9 at the end. Twelve tricks and slam made. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Brain Trainer

EASY 37	+ 4	x 2	+ 8	2/5 OF IT	+ 6	50% OF IT	+ 14	÷ 5	+ 9	ANSWER
MEDIUM 14	SQUARE IT	+ 68	x 2	– 75	+1/3 OF IT	+ 76	90% OF IT	+ 66	1/2 OF IT	ANSWER
HARDER 183	x 6	+ 986	+1/2 OF IT	x 2	– 448	+1/2 OF IT	– 781	40% OF IT	– 593	ANSWER

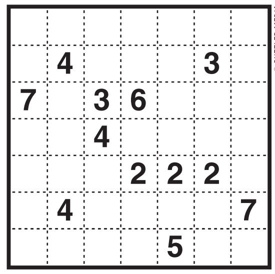
Polygon



From these letters, make words of **four** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives.
How you rate 13 words, average; 18, good; 23, very good; 28, excellent

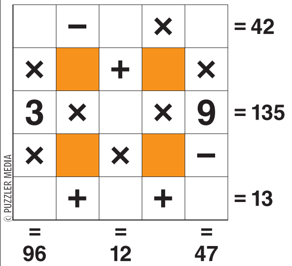
Yesterday's answers
eth, hep, hew, hie, pep, pet, pew, pewit, phew, pie, pipe, the, thew, tie, wet, whet, **whippet**, white, wipe, withe

Cell Blocks No 4882



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

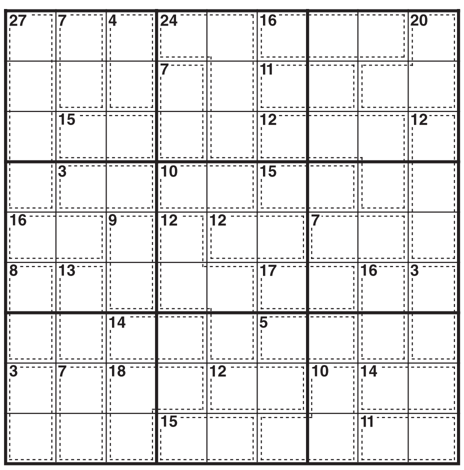
Set Square No 3520



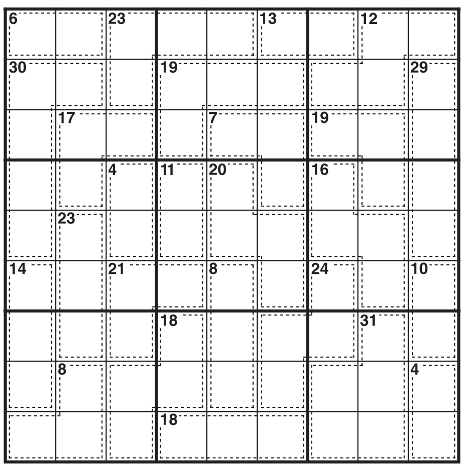
Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Killer Tricky No 9055



Killer Deadly No 9056



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2476

S	O	C	R	A	T	E	S		B	L	E	W
	I		A		O		T		A		R	
P	L	U	M		P	I	E	C	H	A	R	T
	W		E				A		A		O	
T	E	E	N	A	G	E	D		M	A	R	E
	L				R		F		A			
A	L	P	I	N	E		A	S	S	E	S	S
			N		Y		S				I	
A	C	E	S		H	A	T	S	T	A	N	D
	U		T		O				U		A	
A	B	S	O	L	U	T	E		B	A	T	S
	E		R		N		B		E		R	
I	S	L	E		D	O	B	E	R	M	A	N

Codeword 4998

	B	R	U	T	E		A	B	Y	S	S	
P		A		I		T		U		W		Q
R	O	D		C	H	A	O	S		E	M	U
O		A				X				E		I
T	U	R	F		W	I	G		E	P	I	C
U			U	S	E		L	A	X			K
B	U	Z	Z		E		E		I	R	I	S
E			Z	A	P		A	S	S			I
R	A	C	Y		Y	E	N		T	O	O	L
A		O				D				D		V
N	U	N		M	O	G	U	L		I	C	E
T		C		A		E		E		U		R
	C	H	I	C	K		J	E	M	M	Y	

Kakuro 3516

9	3		3	1	2		7	9	
8	6		1	2	4		1	7	5
7	4			3	1	7	5	8	9
5	2	8	1			1	2		
	8	9	7	6	4		3	1	
	1	2		1	2	5	9	3	
		7	9			1	6	2	4
1	4	6	8	9	3			5	6
3	2	1		8	2	9		6	8
	1	3		6	1	7		8	9

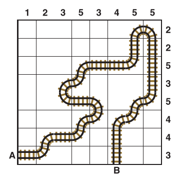
Sudoku 14,300

6	4	9	5	3	7	1	8	2
3	7	2	1	8	6	4	9	5
8	5	1	9	2	4	3	7	6
4	8	6	7	1	5	2	3	9
2	9	5	6	4	3	8	1	7
1	3	7	8	9	2	5	6	4
5	1	8	4	6	9	7	2	3
7	6	3	2	5	8	9	4	1
9	2	4	3	7	1	6	5	8

Tetonor 393

11	130	39	66
7 + 4	10 x 13	6 + 33	66 x 1
120	17	80	23
10 x 12	9 + 8	10 x 8	13 + 10
28	72	22	198
4 x 7	9 x 8	10 + 12	6 x 33
67	25	156	18
1 + 66	12 + 13	13 x 12	8 + 10

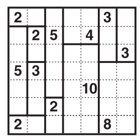
Train Tracks 2032



Sudoku 14,301

6	8	7	2	1	5	9	3	4
5	3	2	4	9	7	8	6	1
4	1	9	6	8	3	5	7	2
7	6	1	5	2	8	4	9	3
9	4	8	7	3	1	2	5	6
2	5	3	9	4	6	1	8	7
8	7	4	1	6	9	3	2	5
1	9	6	3	5	2	7	4	8
3	2	5	8	7	4	6	1	9

Cell Blocks 4881



Set Square 3519

8	+	4	÷	3
+	■	+	■	+
6	×	2	+	9
×	■	×	■	+
7	×	5	×	1

Lexica 7033

B	U	N	G	L	E
E			R		R
F		L	A	Z	E
O			V		C
U			E		T
L			L		

Sudoku 14,302

9	4	2	7	6	8	5	3	1
1	5	7	4	2	3	8	6	9
8	3	6	9	5	1	2	7	4
7	2	3	5	1	6	9	4	8
6	9	8	2	3	4	1	5	7
5	1	4	8	9	7	3	2	6
2	7	1	6	8	5	4	9	3
4	8	5	3	7	9	6	1	2
3	6	9	1	4	2	7	8	5

Futoshiki 4557

3 1 5 > 4 2
∧ (below 1)
5 2 3 > 1 4
∨ (below 4)
4 < 5 1 2 < 3
∧ (below 1) ∧ (below 3)
1 < 4 2 3 < 5
2 3 < 4 5 1

KenKen 5990

2÷ 1	2	4 4	360× 5	2÷ 6	3
3÷ 2	3 3	10× 5	6	6+ 1	4
6	1− 5	2	4	2− 3	1
10+ 4	6	18× 1	3	5	2 2
5	1	3	2÷ 2	2− 4	1− 6
7+ 3	4	6	1	2	5

Lexica 7034

	B		I		D
P	O	N	C	H	O
	A		O		O
G	R	I	N		D
	D		I		L
		A	C	R	E

Killer 9053

9	8	6	4	3	2	1	5	7
2	7	3	9	1	5	8	6	4
1	4	5	6	8	7	3	9	2
3	6	7	5	4	8	2	1	9
5	1	2	3	6	9	7	4	8
8	9	4	2	7	1	5	3	6
7	3	8	1	9	6	4	2	5
4	2	9	8	5	3	6	7	1
6	5	1	7	2	4	9	8	3

Killer 9054

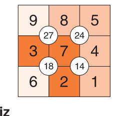
4	5	9	6	3	1	7	8	2
2	1	8	9	4	7	5	3	6
3	6	7	8	5	2	9	4	1
7	2	5	1	6	4	3	9	8
6	9	1	3	8	5	2	7	4
8	4	3	7	2	9	1	6	5
1	8	6	2	7	3	4	5	9
9	7	4	5	1	8	6	2	3
5	3	2	4	9	6	8	1	7

Today's solutions

Concise Quintagram
1 Seoul
2 Throne
3 Clouts
4 Matins
5 Debugging

Cryptic Quintagram
1 Fire
2 Fetid
3 Ablaze
4 Plantain
5 Collegian

Suko 3900



Brain Trainer
Easy 16
Medium 339
Harder 2,577

Word watch

Mondegreen (a) An amusingly misheard word or phrase (*Collins*)
Ombrogenous (b) Thriving in wet conditions (*Chambers*)
Camoudie (b) A boa constrictor (*OED*)

Chess — Winning Move

1 Rg4! unleashes a winning attack against the black kingside. Black cannot defend the g7-square and 1 ... Qxc4 2 Rxg7+ Kh8 3 Rg8+! Kxg8 4 Qh8 is mate

Quiz

1 Eye **2** Red Arrows **3** Ministry of Defence **4** *The Good Life* **5** Mexico **6** The Jam **7** Lucian Freud **8** Preston **9** Italy **10** Clarinet **11** *News from Nowhere* **12** Garrett Hardin **13** Andrew Jackson, who was captured in 1781 by the British during the American Revolution **14** Pole vault **15** Simone Rocha, daughter of fashion designer John Rocha

THE TIMES

06.09.23

MindGames

For extra puzzles See page 10

Word watch
David Parfitt

Mondegreen
a An amusingly misheard word
b An inexperienced globetrotter
c A patina forming on copper or bronze

Ombrogenous
a Masculine
b Thriving in wet conditions
c Providing shade or shelter

Camoudie
a A sport similar to hurling
b A boa constrictor
c A brooch bearing a design in relief

Answers on page 15

Sudoku

Difficult No 14,303

4				1	9		3	
			5		2	8		
				5		1	7	
3	6				4		8	
5	8					2		
1	5		8	7				
	2		4	9			5	

Fiendish No 14,304

6							8	3
				2		7		5
	4		9				2	
			7	4				
	5				1		6	
		7	5		9	2		
	1		8					
		5		3		8		
4								2

Super fiendish No 14,305

		1			7			
	6				9	3	7	
						9		6
6			5	3			9	
1				2				4
2			9	7			8	
						1		7
	4				3	8	6	
		7			5			

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz
Olav Bjortomt

1 The common condition conjunctivitis is also known as pink . . . what?

2 Formed in 1964, which RAF aerobatic display team are known for their trademark "diamond nine" shape?

3 The Duke of York's Royal Military School in Guston, Kent is sponsored by which government department?

4 Penelope Keith played Margo Leadbetter in which 1970s sitcom?

5 In 1899, Sol lager was created in the city of Orizaba in which country?

6 Formed in 1972 at Woking's Sheerwater Secondary School, which band's 1977 debut single was *In the City*?

7 Which English painter had nine daughters, including Annabel, Annie, Esther, Bella, Jane and Lucy?

8 Ashton-on-Ribble, Fulwood, Ingol, Lea and Ribbleton are suburbs of which city in Lancashire?

9 In 1814 what did the Austrian chancellor Metternich define as a "mere geographical expression"?

10 GB Shaw called Henry Lazarus (1815–95) the best player of which woodwind instrument in England?

JED CULLEN/DAVE BENETT/GETTY IMAGES



11 William Guest falls asleep and wakes up in a future socialist society in which 1890 work by William Morris?

12 Which controversial American ecologist wrote the 1993 book *Living Within Limits: Ecology, Economics and Population?*

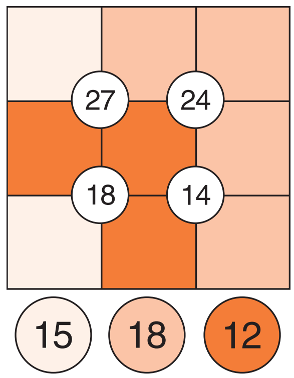
13 Who is the only US president to have been a prisoner of war?

14 At the 2023 World Athletics Championships, Katie Moon and Nina Kennedy shared gold in which event?

15 Which Irish-born fashion designer is pictured?

Answers on page 15

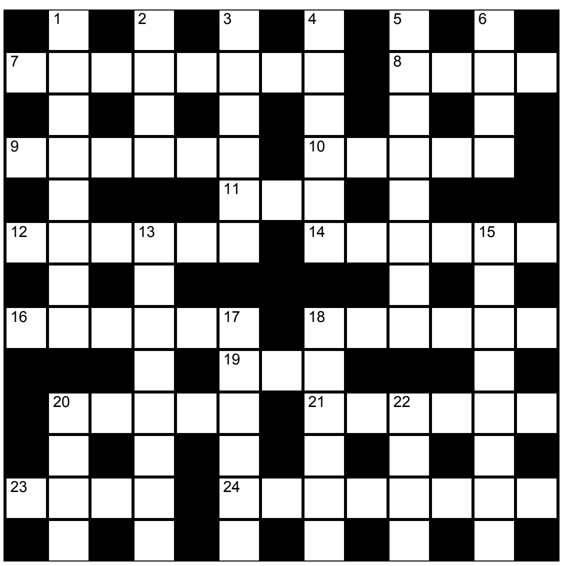
Suko
No 3900



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

For interactive puzzles visit thetimes.co.uk

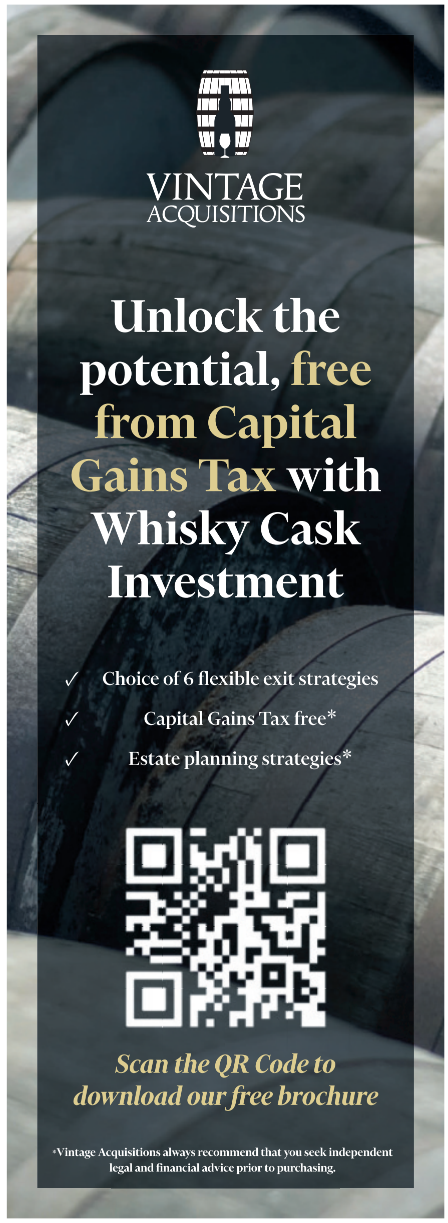
The Times Quick Cryptic
No 2477 by Teazel



Across
7 Certain to explain about the computer industry (8)
8 Magnificent online film (4)
9 Lots of dogs off the lead (6)
10 Small appreciative crowd (5)
11 So embarrassed, if this is curling (3)
12 Half of us heard goose in the country (6)
14 Very enthusiastic type drawing plenty back into party (6)
16 I had cared to relinquish European personal document? (2,4)
18 Trees in front, stone behind (6)
19 Song is broadcast (3)
20 Be very busy with a new person (5)
21 Worker perhaps abandons vital foreign consignment (6)
23 Food, wise to distribute between baskets, they say (4)
24 Son prepared to be drinking greedily (8)

Down
1 Was in right place to take ages with journalist (8)
2 Plug at first fits badly (4)
3 Seat is awkward for nap (6)
4 Temperature lowered, subjected to banter (6)
5 Retire an unreliable old servant (8)
6 Tree, mark, is solidly rooted (4)
13 Weapon I stuck into head — pilot must report this (4,4)
15 "Motorway pace" — should have read "Motorway race"? (8)
17 Rush round part of UK for something to go with coffee (6)
18 Female stiff and unresponsive (6)
20 Enormously fat, good to be in the shade (4)
22 Dog conceals large part of tooth (4)

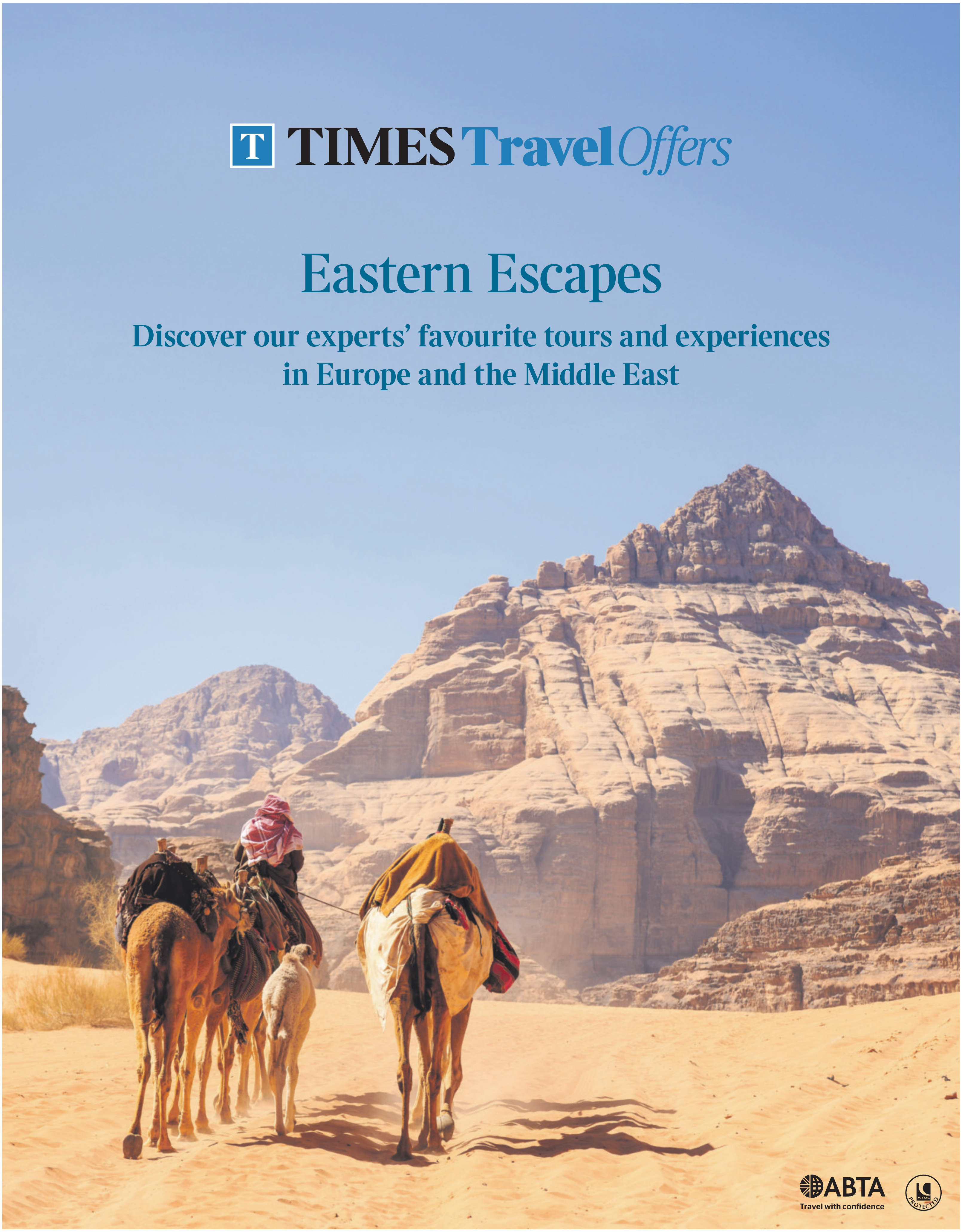
Yesterday's solution on page 15



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Explore the ancient cities of Troy and Unesco-listed Ephesus. Join an exclusive archaeological tour of Magnesia, explore the rarely visited Pamukkale and visit the ruins of Perge. Enjoy some local hospitality in the Turkish countryside before heading inland to the Anatolian Plateau, where you'll follow the trail of the Silk Road. Pay a visit to one of its most famed and beautiful caravanserais.

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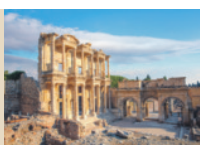
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Your explorations begin around Amman, Jordan's cosmopolitan capital city, where you'll not only get to stroll the vibrant streets of the modern city but delve into its ancient Roman roots in the old city. You'll enjoy a unique experience – creating your own Nai – an Arabic reed flute. You'll also explore the close by Roman city of Jerash, experiencing a chariot race, and the fortress of Qa'lat Al Rabad with its views over the Jordan Valley.

Visit Mount Nebo and Madaba en route to Jordan's showstopping sight. A city hewn into cliff faces and gorges of rose-hued sandstone, Petra is a wonder of the world – you'll spend a day exploring its many facades, caves and tombs, visiting both in daylight and by candlelight and enjoy an authentic Levantine cooking class with a local chef.

Wadi Rum is a place of startling beauty, its sands, weathered mountains and ancient valleys a veritable moonscape of reds.

You'll follow Lawrence's Road, spending the night in a unique desert camp with luxurious en-suite private tents.

The adventure ends on a high on the shores of the Dead Sea, considered the world's first spa destination, where you're free to spend the afternoon bobbing in its super salty, healing waters.

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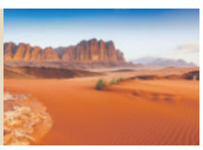
Wendy Wu Tours

Price Includes

- International flights and current taxes
- Outstanding national escort
- All touring with local guides and entrance fees
- All meals
- Domestic transportation
- All accommodation throughout the tour

What We Love

Featuring Jordan's highlights, this tour is the perfect overview of this spectacular and wonder-filled country. Ticking off two bucket-list worthy sights in Petra and the Dead Sea, you're in for an adventure worthy of T.E Lawrence.



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EIGHT DAYS
DEPARTURES APRIL TO OCTOBER 2024

Tuscany embodies much that Italy is famous for, possessing more historical monuments than any other country on earth. Its cities, Florence, Siena and Pisa, together with smaller towns and medieval villages like Lucca and San Gimignano, house some of the world's finest artistic treasures. Combine this with the haunting beauty of the local countryside, an enviable climate and one of the world's great cuisines, and you have all the ingredients for a superb holiday.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports with hotel transfers
- Seven nights in three-star superior to four-star accommodation inclusive of all local taxes with breakfast and four dinners, plus one lunch

YOUR INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Two guided tours including beautiful Florence and medieval Siena
- Five visits including San Gimignano, Pisa, Lucca, Volterra and a timed visit to the Uffizi
- Enjoy authentic Tuscan food at a rural Italian farmhouse

SIGNATURE TOUR INCLUDES

- Soak up spectacular views of Siena from a favourite local beauty spot whilst you sip a typical aperitivo
- Stroll amongst the vibrant blooms and fascinating plants on display in the Boboli Gardens, one of the most historic Italian Gardens and enjoy an insight into the lives of the influential Medici family as you explore the extraordinary Pitti Palace
- Amidst the gently rolling slopes of Chianti's sun-baked hills, enjoy a typical Tuscan lunch and wine-tasting of some of the region's finest produce

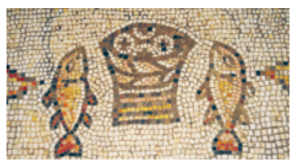
To book, visit **thetimes.co.uk/riviera-ft**



EIGHT DAYS
DEPARTURES FEBRUARY TO NOVEMBER 2024

Jerusalem and the Holy Land represent an extraordinary collection of both classical and Biblical sites unmatched anywhere else in the world. From the palaces of Herod, the Great to the Sea of Galilee and the old city of Jerusalem.





PRICE INCLUDES

- Return scheduled flights
- Stay in hand-picked four-star accommodation with daily breakfast and six dinners

YOUR INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Four guided tours including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem's 'Old City', Acre, Masada and the Garden of Gethsemane
- Eight visits including the Dead Sea, Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity, Nazareth and the Church of the Annunciation, the Church of the Multiplication, Yad Vashem and Caesarea
- Boat cruise on the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum

To book, visit **thetimes.co.uk/riviera-jr**

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2024 Croatia Island-Hopping Private Yacht & Magical Montenegro Experience

Experience the wonders of Croatia and Montenegro as you sail the glistening Adriatic coastline on board MS Roko.

This dream 10-night getaway is sprinkled with once-in-a-lifetime experiences. You'll travel in style on the resplendent MS Roko island-hopping to Korčula, Hvar, Split and Vis. You'll also tour the extraordinary Mljet National Park, before arriving in the enchanting city of Dubrovnik.

Once you've experienced the best of Croatia, you'll transfer to the five-star Maestral Resort & Casino Budva, Montenegro, following a cruise around the stunning waters of Boka Bay. Discover Cetinje, the old capital of Montenegro; the mountainous Lovcen National Park and sample delicacies in the village of Njeguši. During your stay, be sure to make use of the spa facilities, including a 30-minute massage to relax and rejuvenate. And to cap off your unforgettable experience, you'll enjoy a farewell gala dinner overlooking the beautiful town of Budva.



Discover Montenegro & the Maestral Resort & Casino

Maestral Resort & Casino is a luxurious hotel on the Adriatic coast of Montenegro. With its stunning views and world-class amenities, it offers an unforgettable experience.

Montenegro, offers a captivating blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and Mediterranean warmth. With its breathtaking Adriatic coastline, rugged mountains, and historic towns, Montenegro beckons travellers in search of adventure, relaxation, and culture.

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Departing

April - October, 2024

Cruise Itinerary

Dubrovnik • Korčula • Hvar • Split • Vis • Mljet National Park • Dubrovnik

Price Includes

- ✓Seven-night half-board cruise on board MS Roko
- ✓Escorted tours of Korčula, Hvar, Split, Mljet National Park and Dubrovnik walking tours
- ✓Dining Experiences: Relish a decadent Captains Dinner on board MS Roko, Experience a three-course farewell gala dinner overlooking the town of Budva
- ✓Three-night five-star hotel stay in Montenegro at the Maestral Resort & Casino with breakfast
- ✓Enjoy a 30-minute Mediterranean massage
- ✓All flights and transfers (London departure - regional flights available)

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Grand Tour of Italy

Departures | October 2023 to October 2024

15 DAYS FROM
£2,549* per person

Save £200 per couple*

Price Includes

- Return flights from London, overseas transfers & other transportation
- 14 nights in four-star hotels
- 14 breakfasts, one lunch, eight dinners
- Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director
- Tours of Venice, Florence and Rome
- Visits to Treviso, Bologna, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Orvieto and Taormina
- Explore the ruins of Pompeii

Travel from the top to the toe of Italy on an amazing tour and be introduced to many of the country's iconic highlights – explore the canals of Venice, visit the 'Field of Miracles' and the world-famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. Travel through Tuscany's beautiful countryside enroute to Rome where you can throw a coin in the Trevi fountain. Visit the scenic Sorrento Peninsula, wander through the ruins of Pompeii before you take in the magnificent views of brooding Mount Etna on the stunning island of Sicily.

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Croatian Island Hopping

Departures | May to September 2024

EIGHT DAYS FROM
£1,999* per person

Save £200 per couple*

Price Includes

- Return flights from London, overseas transfers & other transportation
- Seven nights on board the deluxe MV Adriatic Pearl
- Seven breakfasts, four lunches, four dinners and welcome drink
- Tour of Mljet National Park
- Explore Dubrovnik Old Town
- Discover UNESCO-listed Split
- Home-made olive oil tasting
- Enjoy a Captain's Dinner on board
- Services of a Travelsphere Holiday Director

Step on board the MV Adriatic Pearl for a seven-night cruise along the stunning Dalmatian coastline. Explore Croatia's picturesque islands and historic coastal towns as this tour works its way down the coast from Split to Korčula and on to Dubrovnik. After a couple of days enjoying the sights of Dubrovnik, your ship makes its way back up to Split, docking at Mljet, Hvar - known as the sunniest of the Croatian islands, and the less known but utterly delightful Solta. In between each visit, you can soak up the sun from the deck of your elegant ship and enjoy beautiful swim stops.

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Holiday of a lifetime, every time.

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Save up to £100 per person on selected departures

Exclusively for the solo traveller

Historical Malta – Palaces, Folklore & WWII

Departures | October 2023 to November 2024

EIGHT DAYS FROM
£1,299*
per person

Price Includes

- Return flights from London (other regional airports available)
- Overseas transfers, other transportation & porterage
- Seven nights in a four-star hotel, with a guaranteed room of your own
- Seven breakfasts, three dinners
- Valletta city tour and visit to the saluting battery
- Visits to Naxxar, Mdina & Mosta
- Just You Holiday Director as your host and Specialist Local Guide

Malta's unique blend of culture, history, and natural beauty promises an unforgettable experience and the history of this Mediterranean gem is firmly in focus on this fascinating tour. You'll explore Malta's stunning capital, Valletta, a UNESCO World Heritage site boasting grand architecture and captivating museums. As part of your tour of the city, you'll visit the saluting battery and experience the firing cannon! There are also visits to Marsaxlokk, a traditional fishing village known for its bustling market and harbour, as well as the fortified city of Mdina. Considered to be the jewel of Malta, you can spend time in its narrow streets and experience its medieval charm.

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Exclusively for the solo traveller

Treasures of Andalucía

Departures | November 2023 to November 2024

EIGHT DAYS FROM
£1,249*
per person

Price Includes

- Return flights from London (other regional airports available)
- Overseas transfers, other transportation & porterage
- Seven nights in a four-star hotel, with a guaranteed room of your own
- Seven breakfasts, seven dinners
- Tour of Malaga
- Visits to the clifftop town of Ronda, and traditional villages of Frigiliana and Nerja
- Just You Holiday Director as your host and Specialist Local Guide

Enjoy the Spanish way of life in Andalucía on this relax and discover style of tour, created exclusively for solo travellers. An enthralling region which boasts a mild Mediterranean climate, you'll have the opportunity to admire the whitewashed houses that cling to the hilltop towns of Mijas and Ronda. A tour of vibrant Malaga is also included – as well as being Picasso's birthplace, this cosmopolitan city is enveloped in more than 3,000 years of history making it one of the oldest cities in the world. There's also time to relax on Nerja's lovely sandy beaches.

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